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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Most of you who read this book knew its author, Bill Gilbert, as teacher, mentor, relative, colleague, scholar, friend. This is his book.

It has never been published.

A few months after Bill's death on September 14, 1992, I found the typed manuscript for his textbook on Renaissance and Reformation on which he had worked up to the early 1970s and which I had always referred to as THE BOOK. To publish it for family and special friends and for the libraries at the University of Chicago, where Bill did his B.A.; Cornell, where he studied with Preserved Smith for his Ph.D.; and Kansas, where he taught for 37 years, became my goal. Working on THE BOOK has given me a four-year directed study in "Ren n'Ref" with my favorite historian. It has been an engaging and rewarding experience.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend special thanks to family and to colleagues in the University of Kansas Retirees Club who, knowing of this project, have offered encouragement, support, assistance; Richard Hardin, English, and David Katzman, history, who offered to read the manuscript and who made helpful comments, and to Fred Woodward, director of University Press of Kansas, who also read the manuscript and made useful comments about its publication; Lynn and Carolyn Nelson, history, who asked to put THE BOOK on CARRIE on the Internet;

Joanne Beal Feist, who had five history courses from Bill and offered her expertise in history and in proofreading;

Barbara Shortridge of the Cartographic Service, Department of Geography at KU, for the maps;

Don Watkins, linguistics, who read Chapter 12 and made useful suggestions;

Paula Courtney of the CLAS Word Processing Center, for her caring and expert assistance in preparing the manuscript for publication;

Judith Galas, respected editor, writer, and colleague, who by agreeing to serve as editor,

made the publication of THE BOOK a reality and to whom I am extremely grateful.

I did the Index.

I accept responsibility for any errors.

Edwyna Condon Gilbert (Mrs. William)

Lawrence, Kansas



EDITOR'S PREFACE

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I met Bill Gilbert only once a quick introduction on a Lawrence sidewalk. I never heard him lecture; I never listened to his conversations with colleagues and friends. I came to know him only through his writing.

I found in these pages a great conversationalist, a storyteller interested in much more than facts. This history is packed with human drama and abundant anecdotes, impressions, and gossip. Certainties and truth, however, are scarce that's how Bill wanted it. When interviewed for the K.U. Retirees' Club Oral History Project, Bill shared one of his favorite quotes: "History is a damn dim candle over a damn dark abyss."

He obviously loved history precisely because it was complex and uncertain. He makes no excuses for the elements that affect, change and even distort truth: passion, rivalries, political intrigue, lies, anger, love of God, devotion to country, and hatred of enemies.

History may not be absolutely true, but clearly Bill found it absolutely fascinating. It gave him endless opportunity to study and reflect and then to share those reflections with others. It is his passion to share that enlivens this book and that invites us to learn more. In *The Renaissance and the Reformation*, he gives us the basic outline and seems to say, "Go find the rest of the story." The reader in me could almost hear Bill digress, chuckle, and pause to collect his next thought. The editor in me wishes Bill and I could have sat down for long talks. "What do you want this sentence to stress?" I might have asked, and his reply, most likely, would have been thoughtful and punctuated with additional details. Because we couldn't chat, I was left to decide what editing changes Bill would have agreed to if he and I were deep in an editor-writer conversation.

In the end, the book emerges almost exactly as Bill wrote it. It has his voice. His occasional use of the first person captures the tone he might have used while lecturing; his commas reflect his speech, which must have been filled with numerous asides and interesting tidbits. He chose the words and the illustrations; he arranged the information. His bibliography and endnotes refer to what were then current works and theories and have not been altered or updated to suit the present day.

In many ways, this book is a time capsule, a peek back into how Bill and his fellow historians viewed the Renaissance and Reformation. It also gives us a way to know the historian Bill Gilbert, a man who sought to understand history, but not to judge its players.

He obviously believed that the actions glimpsed in history no matter how morally or spiritually discouraging are no different from those we can find in the present. The tales of persecution told in Chapter 24 were written before Moslem fundamentalists came to power in Iran, before religious wars rended Yugoslavia, and before photos of African refuge camps and genocide filled the media. The past and the present, Bill would tell us, have much in common. Everything is part of the human journey.

This book is also a journey, a two-person adventure undertaken first by Bill and then by Edwyna. Bill worked on THE BOOK for years. He was tenured at KU before "Publish or perish" became the professional mantra, so he didn't feel pushed to write. Instead he focused on reading and teaching because he found those activities so much more fascinating and rewarding than writing. He wrote many professional articles, but he never had a book published in hardcover. The completed manuscript Edwyna found attests to the fact that Bill wished to be published.

Edwyna fulfilled that wish. She brought shape and order to a manuscript that without her love would have found its way into a disposable pile of old papers. She took each comma, each factual inconsistency seriously, and dug through countless references until she was satisfied that what would be attributed to Bill would be correct something they could both be proud of. Her diligence, patience, perseverance, respect for knowledge, and curiosity made it possible for THE BOOK to emerge in hardcover, complete with the wonderful photos she secured. She made my job as editor both easy and often superfluous.

Judith Galas
Lawrence, Kansas
November 1997



CHAPTER ONE

MEDIEVAL CIVILIZATION AND INSTITUTIONS

The period of European history known as the Renaissance and Reformation was an age of profound and even revolutionary change. It is true of all revolutions that they cannot be adequately understood without some awareness of the conditions that preceded them and that they eventually destroyed or modified. To appreciate the importance of the Renaissance and the Reformation, the student needs some knowledge of the era that came before them, which we call the Middle Ages.

The expression "Middle Ages," from which is derived the adjective "medieval," originated in fifteenth-century Italy. By that time the notion was becoming familiar among certain scholars that the glorious days of classical antiquity, which had ended with the fall of Rome, had been followed by a long interval of darkness. In their own times these scholars discerned signs of a new dawn, a revival, even a "rebirth." They were unwilling or unable to recognize their profound indebtedness to the centuries in between, which they therefore regarded with contempt. Not all scholars felt that way at the time, and no responsible scholars hold that view today. Indeed the Middle Ages were an extraordinarily creative period and the basis not only for the Renaissance and Reformation but also for modern European civilization.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE

The society of western Europe in the Middle Ages was agrarian the largest segment of the population consisted of the tillers of the soil; the chief basis of wealth and of political power was the land. Industry and commerce were less important relative to agrarian pursuits than they had been in Roman times or were to be in the modern era.

The basic unit of agrarian society was the manor. A manor was an

agricultural estate belonging to a **lord**, a member of the noble class. Most of the inhabitants of the manor were peasants, whose basic job was to cultivate the soil for the lord's benefit. The arable land that is, the land on which crops were raised (arable is based on the Latin word for plough) was often cultivated according to the three-field system, a primitive kind of crop rotation. In this system, one part of the land was planted in any given year with a winter crop, and one part with a spring crop; the third part was allowed to lie fallow, because no better method was known for preventing soil depletion. In the following year the three fields would change roles. Thus approximately one-third of the land was always kept out of production.

The peasant on a manor which used this cycle did not cultivate consolidated blocks of land. Instead, each of the three fields was divided into strips, and the individual peasant had strips in each field. The lord's own holdings, called the *demesne* or domain lands, were also, at least in part, scattered among the fields, though the lord also normally had a solid block of land nearer his residence. The lands were cultivated by the peasants acting together; the animals and the instruments needed for cultivation were too costly for the individual peasant, but belonged to the whole community and were used jointly by its members.

The first duty of the peasant was to help cultivate the **demesne**, from which the lord got the entire product. Having fulfilled this obligation, the peasant could turn his attention to his own strips. These were not his property, however; he held them by grant of the lord who was consequently entitled also to an agreed share of their produce, with the remainder going to the cultivator. There were other obligations to the lord: to grind grain into flour, to bake bread from the flour, and to press wine from grapes. The lord's mill, oven, and winepress had to be used, and a fee of so much flour, so many loaves, so much wine had to be paid. When a peasant died, his family paid a death tax; when a member of a peasant's family married, the lord's consent was needed. The peasant possessed, it was said, *nihil praeter ventrem* nothing but his belly.

Peasants were, in law, divided into two categories -- unfree and free. The unfree peasant known on the Continent as a **serf**, in England as a villein was supposedly entirely at his lord's disposal. The free peasant, on the other hand, had certain rights. He could not, for example, be held to more than a specified number of days of labor on the *demesne* every week. In practice, the status of the free peasant tended to approach that of the unfree, rather than the other way around. The peasant also had to pay for the services of religion. A **tithe** of his produce went for the maintenance of the priest.

Strictly speaking, tithe means a tenth, but tithes tended to become fixed payments of each kind of produce without much necessary relationship to a tenth. It is to be assumed that the peasant whose life was a constant round of backbreaking drudgery from which he himself derived little profit, was in great need of the consolations of the church. Certainly the church was a pervasive presence in his life, encompassing him in its ministrations throughout all the important events and turning points of his career and indelibly coloring his outlook on the everyday incidents of his existence.

The manor also had its judicial aspect. The lord had rights of justice over his peasants, and the lord's court held jurisdiction over many aspects of manorial life. The law that was enforced was the customary law, and custom varied from one manor to another. It was probably custom that provided the chief protection to the peasants against excessive demands by their lords custom and the natural desire of any prudent employer to keep the labor force healthy for his own benefit. The manor was to a considerable degree self-sufficient. Clothing, household utensils, and other necessities were produced right there by peasant craftsmen. Some goods were purchased that were not products of the manor itself, but contact with the outside was comparatively slight.

At no time, however, did the manor and manorial system constitute all there was of medieval society. In some areas, agriculture was organized on a non-manorial basis. Moreover, the towns and the cities of the ancient Roman Empire often survived, though much diminished. From the eleventh century, they began to grow again. This growth occurred earliest in Italy and the Netherlands, and spread from there to other parts of western Europe, producing numerous important urban centers. London and Paris, Lübeck and Naples, Bruges and Bergen, and numerous other cities, made their distinctive contributions to medieval life.

The underlying force in medieval urban growth was **economic**, a revival of trade. Such towns and cities as had survived the fall of Rome had owed their urban status to the presence of military garrisons or episcopal sees. They were not very large, and were distinguished from the surrounding countryside largely by the possession of walls. With the revival of trade, this was changed. The towns grew at a rate unknown for centuries; so many persons came to settle outside the old walls that new ones had to be built enclosing a much greater area. Not only did the size of the towns increase, but a whole new way of life came to be established within them. Many of the inhabitants were merchants conducting their trade, often international in scope, from their city headquarters.

Along with trade came banking and manufacturing. A class of big businessmen arose, and in connection with it an urban working class, or proletariat. For this new urban society, new types of legal institutions and property tenure had to be devised. A mercantile law, or **law merchant**, grew up to settle cases arising from trade disputes. Property holding was set free from the complex network of relationships and obligations that had burdened it, and it became possible for city dwellers to hold property outright.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of urban life was freedom. Many peasants, perhaps most, were unfree; all town dwellers were free. "The air of the city makes free" was a proverbial saying; a serf who escaped from the manor and lived in a city for a year and a day without being apprehended by his lord became legally a free man.

Freedom is contagious; these islands of freedom in a largely unfree society infected neighboring areas, and freedom spread to the countryside. To meet the needs of the expanding urban populations, new lands had to be opened for cultivation. Workers had to be induced to move to this land from their former homes, and one attraction that was held out to them was freedom. Thus from the eleventh century, a series of interrelated developments can be traced which changed the face of Europe. Towns grew and flourished; trade, banking, and manufacturing became established on a new scale; more and more persons achieved the legal status of free men. Along with all this, and possibly more basic than any of it, vast tracts of land, which had been uninhabited or uninhabitable forest or swamp, were cleaned, drained, and subjected to cultivation. The great German "Drive to the East" pushed several hundred miles eastward the boundaries of western and central European settlement, encroaching on the lands of such Eastern Europeans as the Slavs, and producing fateful and enduring consequences.

Among the dwellers in the towns were the class of small shopkeepers and craftsmen organized into **guilds**. Each craft guild regulated a particular branch of economic life in the town. It was a protective organization. On the one hand, it protected its members from outside competition by strictly regulating the conditions under which goods or their makers could come in from other towns. It also protected the members from one another by regulating their hours of work and the number of employees they could hire. Finally, it protected the public by enforcing standards of workmanship on its members.

When a boy was accepted by a guild to learn the trade, he was called an

apprentice. When his training was completed after a specified period of time -- often seven -- years he became a **journeyman**, that is a man who worked by the day. (Journe in French means "day.") He could then become a paid worker for a master of his guild. In some areas, as in Germany, it was customary for a journeyman to have a period of travel (the so-called *Wanderjahre*) before settling down.

The ultimate goal of the apprentice and journeyman was to become a **master**. This meant that he could open his own shop, hire journeymen, and train apprentices. Only the masters were actually members of the guilds and regulated their affairs. To become a master, the aspirant had to satisfy the already existing masters as to his possession of sufficient capital and sufficient competence. One way to fulfill the latter requirement was to produce a piece of work which was worthy of a master that is, a *masterpiece*.

In addition to the craft guilds, there also existed merchant guilds, organizations of the greater businessmen whose enterprises transcended the boundaries of their town and sometimes their nation. The ordinary workers employed by these great businessmen were not allowed to organize into guilds. They were permanently disfranchised, with no economic or political power. They were most vulnerable to all the dangers of life in a medieval town. Economic conditions in these towns were more unstable than in the countryside, and when business was bad it was the workers who suffered most. Living in crowded, unsanitary conditions, they were hit hardest by epidemics and plagues. In bad crop years, when food was scarce and prices high, they were the ones who went hungry. In good times, they might be quiescent; when things were bad, they formed a permanent source of potential discontent and even of revolutionary violence.

It was the guild masters who tended to dominate the towns politically. Sometimes this required a struggle against existing authority: a bishop, a nobleman, or an older ruling class. Invariably, however, it was the guilds who won out. In doing so, they managed to establish governments that were more representative than could be found elsewhere in medieval Europe. The degree of independence enjoyed by the towns varied according to the presence or absence of a strong central authority able to subject them to its rule.

In Italy, Switzerland, and Germany, where no such government succeeded in establishing itself permanently, towns achieved virtual independence. In France and England strong monarchies kept the towns under their control. In the Netherlands an intermediate status prevailed. While the towns

enjoyed a large measure of autonomy, they had overlords, lay and ecclesiastical, who retained considerable power over them.

POLITICAL LIFE: FEUDALISM

Feudalism is a word of fairly recent origin which was coined to describe the type of government that prevailed in medieval Europe. There has been much debate about the origins of feudalism. Did it spring from Roman or Germanic roots? The answer seems to be that it was primarily Germanic in origin, but that some practices and arrangements that grew up in ancient Rome also made their contribution.

Medieval feudalism arose in, and was adapted to, a state of society in which land was the source of wealth and military force the basis of power in an agrarian society under siege. In the early Middle Ages, after the breakdown of Rome and its institutions, and with western Europe subject to attack by Moslems, Norsemen, and Hungarians, feudalism took shape. Until about the end of the thirteenth century, it succeeded fairly well in maintaining order. With innumerable variations in practice, it prevailed throughout the West, though in some areas, notably Italy, it never took deep roots.

Feudalism derives its name from the **fief** (in Latin, *feudum*). The fief was generally, though not always, a grant of land from one nobleman to another. The one granting the fief was the **lord**; the recipient was his **vassal**. A lord could have several vassals, and a vassal could have several lords. The same man could be both a lord and a vassal. The relationship between lord and vassal was a personal one; in theory, it could not be inherited or transferred. It was established when the vassal swore an oath to be the man (*homo* in Latin; *homme* in French) of the lord. This was the oath of **homage**.

The effect of this oath was to set up a series of reciprocal duties and obligations. The lord had to protect his vassal, the vassal to serve his lord. Service to the lord was strictly defined, and limits could not be exceeded except with the vassal's consent. It involved, first of all, military service. The noble class was a class of fighting men, and its members were knights, men who fought on horseback. (Both the Latin and French words for knight, *equus* and *chevalier* respectively, have as their roots words for horseman.) This military service was limited to a certain number of days each year; forty was a common number.

The vassal also had to make payments to his lord on specified occasions, such as the marriage of the lord's oldest daughter or the knighting of his

oldest son. He had to contribute to his lord's ransom when the latter was captured in battle. He was required to extend hospitality to his lord for a given number of days each year; that is, he had to put up at his own castle not only the lord, but the latter's retinue of persons and animals, which might be a considerable one. The feudal vassal also had the general obligation to give advice and counsel to his lord when called upon to do so. This might involve a summons to the lord's court, where the lord met with all his vassals to adjudicate cases arising out of the feudal relationship. Some breach of obligation or some conflict between lord and vassal, or between vassals, might need to be settled. Here the lord and his vassals were acting in what might be called a judicial capacity. Thus the nobles were involved in two different sorts of courts: the manorial court where the lord or his representative judged cases involving the peasants on the manor, and the feudal court for cases involving nobles.

Of course, the lord might require other sorts of advice and counsel. Where the feudal lord was also a king, as in England after the Norman Conquest of 1066, his meetings with his vassals form the embryo of national government. When a king summoned his vassals to give him advice and assistance, this meeting was called the **curia regis**. The fact that the Latin word *curia*, as used here, can be translated as either court or council, indicates that the functions of government were not classified and specialized then as they are today. This council, or court, of the king and his advisers took actions that were administrative, judicial, fiscal, military and diplomatic, and even legislative. The word legislative must, however, be used here with caution. In the states that arose during the Middle Ages out of the Germanic kingdoms, the idea of legislation making law did not really exist. Law was identified with the established custom of the tribe or of a specific area, and, therefore, it already existed.

Thus the law applicable to a particular situation did not need to be made, but to be found, perhaps by asking the oldest inhabitants of a given area. One of the earliest uses of the **jury**, which means a sworn body of men, was to provide such information. Of course, new laws were made, but for a long time the process was disguised.

In England, to take a convenient example, the meetings of the king and his council contained the germ of all the great offices and institutions of royal government. From these meetings, at first so informal and unspecialized, there arose **the Chancery, the Treasury, the Exchequer, and the Courts of Common Law**. As their activities expanded and their procedures became more complex and elaborate, they tended to acquire an increasing number of functionaries and a body of permanent records. With these developments

came necessarily a fixed headquarters; members of the government no longer followed the king but did their business in a permanent location, in Westminster to be exact, though royal judges continued to travel regularly through the country, hearing cases in the king's name.

Even **Parliament** developed out of the primitive *curia regis*. From time to time, starting, as far as the records show, in the thirteenth century, representatives of the local districts were summoned to appear before the king and his council. These local representatives might come from the *shires* (counties) or from the *boroughs* (towns) or both. The kings might summon them to get their consent to new taxation or to some proposed royal policy, or for a variety of other reasons. It was entirely up to the king whether to call them or not; he did not legally require their consent, but apparently found that obtaining it reduced resistance to his policies and thus made the country easier to govern.

These representatives, knights of the shires and burgesses from the towns, were not invited to come as part of the royal council; they were summoned to appear before the king and council. Although knights and burgesses might have met separately, they developed a habit of meeting together as one body. One of their functions was to present petitions to the king and council. In addition to local petitions, presented perhaps by representatives from one particular district, there arose the device of common petitions, presented by all the members on behalf of all the communities of the realm. The king and council would examine these petitions, grant some, and deny others. The members or Commons, as they came to be called were not slow to realize that, in asking them for money, the king was putting a powerful weapon in their hands. They could make the granting of funds conditional upon the approval of at least some of their petitions. The kings got the message without difficulty, and thus the power of the purse directly influenced royal decisions.

Thus we see the origin of the House of Commons and, in the common petitions granted by the crown, the beginnings of parliamentary legislation. We also see representative government, since the knights and the burgesses were elected. They were not chosen on the basis of what we would today regard as a democratic franchise, but because they were property owners and people of influence. Nevertheless, it is quite likely that they did essentially represent the wishes of the politically conscious groups in the population, and that medieval English government was to a large degree government by consent.

Representative government was widespread in the Middle Ages. It was

embodied in assemblies of estates, in this connotation meaning distinct social groups or classes. These estates were generally the clergy, the nobility, and the townspeople; in Sweden the peasants came to form a separate estate, but this was unusual. In France the *Estates-General* consisted of the First Estate, or clergy; the Second Estate, or nobility; the Third Estate, which in theory represented the rest of the population, but in practice was made up of men from the towns. The bulk of the French population, the peasantry, was really unrepresented. In France, besides the Estates-General of the realm as a whole, there were local estates in some of the provinces, particularly those which had been most recently added to the territory of France. These local estates served as valuable buffers between the people of the provinces and the demands of the royal government.

Although feudal institutions were established throughout western Europe, the political evolution of feudal states did not always move in the same direction. In France and England, strong monarchies developed; in both countries there was a happy combination of favorable circumstances with a remarkably large number of kings of exceptional strength and ability. The case of Germany, however, shows that under less fortunate conditions feudalism might contribute to a breakdown of effective government.

Germany in the Middle Ages was more or less identical with the Holy Roman Empire; though the emperors often laid claim to non-German territories, such as Italy, these claims proved more and more difficult to translate into fact. Throughout much of the tenth and eleventh centuries, Germany was one of the most powerful of the European states, but from the later eleventh century this development was arrested. Conflict between emperors and popes was one factor; this conflict gave the German nobles and princes an opportunity to assert their independence of the emperors, and this independence they never lost. Power in the empire came to rest with the princes, some of whom were lay and some ecclesiastical. The German ecclesiastical princes, the archbishops and bishops, were territorial lords as well as spiritual leaders. As towns grew in Germany, they too acquired a share of political power, particularly the imperial free cities, which owed allegiance only to the emperor and thus enjoyed virtual independence.

The growing weakness of the emperors made possible such an assertion of power by lay nobles, prelates, and towns. It was both a cause and an effect of this weakness that the position of emperor never became hereditary. Emperors were elected, and although several successive emperors might be chosen from the same family, no family ever succeeded in making the crown hereditary in its own line. Elective monarchies were normally weaker than hereditary ones, partly because of the concessions that candidates for

the throne had to make to those who chose them. After 1356, the Holy Roman emperor was always chosen by seven **electors**.

Three of these were princes of the church: the archbishops of Mainz, Trier, and Cologne. Three were the rulers of important territorial states within Germany: the duke of Saxony, the margrave of Brandenburg, and the count Palatine of the Rhine. The seventh elector was the king of Bohemia. These men formed the electoral college and were also the upper house in the assembly of estates in Germany, the **Imperial Diet** or *Reichstag*.

When meeting as part of the diet, the electoral college consisted of only the six German electors; the king of Bohemia was present only for imperial elections. The second house of the diet represented the other German princes, some of whom were powerful rulers in their own rights, and the third house (beginning in the sixteenth century) contained delegates from the imperial free cities. The same pattern of a ruler and a body of estates prevailed in the individual German states as well as in the empire as a whole. But an important distinction must be made. While in the separate states the ruler and the estates engaged in struggles for effective power, in the empire as a whole emperor and diet both became steadily weaker. The empire became little more than a very loose collection of states of various sizes, types of government, and degrees of political importance, largely independent of both the emperor and the diet.

Some emperors made valiant efforts to reverse this trend, but in the long run these efforts proved ineffective. Nevertheless, in spite of its weaknesses, the Holy Roman Empire was still accorded a type of formal and ceremonial precedence in the courts of Europe. Some emperors who held other positions as well as that of emperor could still play an important role in European affairs.

RELIGION: THE CHURCH AND THE PAPACY

The inhabitant of western Europe in the Middle Ages was a Christian, a part of the Roman church, which claimed for itself the name of Catholic or Universal. The Church of Rome was monarchical in structure, under the leadership of the bishop of Rome, called the **pope** (from *papa* or father, a word originally applied to priests in general). Throughout the Middle Ages, the power of the pope within the church grew steadily, though with occasional setbacks. His power with respect to the secular world probably declined from about the start of the fourteenth century or even earlier.

Popes were elected, after 1059, by a body of men known as **cardinals**, who in their turn were chosen by the pope. It came to be the normal practice for the cardinals to elect one of their own number to the papacy. The College of Cardinals not only chose the pope but also served as his chief advisers. They formed part of the papal headquarters at Rome, known as the **Roman Curia**, which, like the administrative organs of the European states, became more elaborate as the powers and activities of the papacy grew. The analogy between the Curia and a secular government can be carried further. It acquired many of the organs of such governments, including a body of law with a judicial system to apply it, and a highly developed fiscal system. Indeed, in many ways it led the European states in these areas.

The law of the church was called **canon law**. Based on decisions of popes and of general councils, it constituted one of the professional subjects studied in the universities. A student could become a doctor of canon law, and many men ambitious for advancement in the church acquired this degree as a stepping-stone to such advancement. As the powers of the pope and church increased, the scope of canon law broadened, encompassing an ever larger variety of cases and situations.

The pope and his Curia presided over a great hierarchy of priests, the clergy. Within this priesthood, the real ruling class of the church was the **episcopate**, that is, the archbishops and bishops. Each bishop presided over a diocese and took his title from the city which was the site of his cathedral; each archbishop, or metropolitan, was the head of a province, consisting of several dioceses. In each diocese, the bishop or his representatives, among their numerous functions, presided over a court in which cases were tried under canon law. Appeals from these local courts could be carried to Rome. Another function of bishops was to ordain priests.

Each diocese contained a number of parishes, and each parish required a priest to look after the spiritual needs of the people, the laity. For the spiritual welfare of their flocks, the priests delivered sermons and administered **sacraments**. The seven sacraments provided for the Christian soul from **baptism**, normally received shortly after birth, to **extreme unction**, administered to the dying. **Confirmation** marked the entry of young persons into the church, and the sacrament of **ordination**, or Holy Orders, made a man a priest; both these sacraments had to be performed by a bishop. **Marriage** was a sacrament, and divorce was not allowed, though in certain cases a marriage might be annulled. There were two sacraments which were received frequently: **Penance** and the **Lord's Supper**. The sacrament of penance centered on the act of confession to a priest. The

individual penitent revealed his sins to the priest, or confessor, who then absolved him, sometimes prescribing acts of penance or satisfaction.

(In England the word *shrive* might be used instead of absolve; the confessor shrove the penitent.) In the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, it was made mandatory for Christians to confess and take Communion at least once a year, and Easter was the time frequently chosen for this purpose.

Communion, or the Lord's Supper or Eucharist, was in many ways the central act of the Christian life. Based on Jesus' last supper with his disciples, this sacrament involved the use of bread and wine, consecrated by the priest and then consumed. Originally both the bread and the wine were offered to the laity, but eventually the wine was withheld from them and drunk by the priest alone, while the consecrated wafer, or host, was given to the laymen.

The reservation of the wine to the priest exclusively was concurrent with the rise of the doctrine of **transubstantiation**. In giving bread and wine to his disciples at the supper, Jesus had referred to them as His body and blood, respectively. These words can be interpreted in numerous ways, and the interpretation that was adopted officially by the church was a literal one. It declared that, although the appearance and physical qualities that is, the accidents of the bread and wine do not change, the essence or substance does. When they are consecrated by the priest, therefore, the substance of the bread and wine actually becomes the substance of Christ's body and blood hence the unwieldy but admittedly precise word, transubstantiation.

The effect of the sacraments was to confer **divine grace**, which was necessary for salvation. The efficacy of the sacrament did not depend on the moral character of the priest; an unworthy priest could administer a sacrament effectively. Only those who had been ordained to the priesthood were qualified to administer the sacraments. The one exception came in the case of an unbaptized infant in imminent danger of dying. To save him from the consequences of dying unbaptized, a layman could perform the rite if no priest were available. Since the sacraments were the keys to salvation, and the priests held these keys, the position of the priest was an exalted one.

In this manner, the church interpreted the power of the keys to the kingdom of Heaven promised by Jesus to Peter (see *Matthew 16*). Peter was regarded as the chief of the Apostles and the first bishop of Rome, and the popes as his successors. Respect for the sacraments and doctrines of the church was deeply ingrained, but was not always accompanied by reverence for the clergy. Perhaps it was the exalted spiritual status of the priests that made the ordinary Christian so sharply aware of deviations from the standard required.

The archbishops, bishops, and priests, whose offices brought them into constant touch with the lay world, were called the **secular clergy**. Alongside them there existed the **regular clergy**, those who lived by a **rule** (*regula* in Latin). For the observance of their rules, these regulars were organized in religious orders. Among these were orders of monks, men who lived in disciplined communities, under the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. These vows, if faithfully obeyed, meant no belongings of one's own; no contact with women and no impure thoughts; no will of one's own but rather complete submission to one's superiors.

The framework of the monastic day was the regular series of religious services from matins to vespers, and within this framework was a highly regulated life of prayer, study, and work. Although the monk's primary aim was the salvation of his own soul, many monasteries were centers of education and scholarship. The monastery was an ideal home for the studious and the contemplative, and much of what was preserved from classical antiquity was preserved by the monks. Some monks were writers themselves, producing works of devotion and of scholarship, including historical, philosophical, theological, and scientific writings. Women too could enter the life of the cloister; orders of nuns abounded, sometimes connected with orders of monks.

Among the monastic rules, the most influential was probably the *Benedictine Rule* of St. Benedict of Nursia (c.480 c.550), which formed the basis of the Benedictine order. There were numerous other rules and orders, among whom the Cistercians and the Carthusians are two of the most famous. Some rules were stricter than others, but all required self-denial and abandonment of the world. Since monks and nuns were bound to an even more austere code than priests, their shortcomings were judged even more harshly, and there grew up an abundant literature of satire and invective directed against lazy, gluttonous, avaricious, and lecherous monks. The nuns were not spared either. Though there was much exaggeration in this criticism, there was no doubt some basis of truth.

Not all inmates of monasteries and convents had entered freely as the result of an inner call. Some had been placed there by their parents when they were still too young to choose, and as they grew up and felt the impulses of youth stirring in them, many no doubt bitterly regretted their confinement. Some nunneries became refuges for undowried girls. Some houses, both of men and women, accepted only candidates from noble families and became centers of an aristocratic and elegant way of life, far removed from the

ascetic ideal to which they were nominally devoted.

As a reaction to these divergences and abuses, reform movements periodically swept through the religious orders and raised their standards to something approaching their original purpose. One of these reform movements produced the orders of friars, of which the two most famous and influential were the **Franciscans** and **Dominicans**, founded respectively by the Italian St. Francis of Assisi (1182 1226) and the Spaniard St. Dominic (c.1170 1221). These new orders differed from the older monastic organizations by coming into direct contact with the world, by doing works of social service or by preaching. The official name of the Dominicans, for example, is the Order of Friars Preachers. The friars were originally mendicants, or beggars, living on alms given them voluntarily by the laity. They were dedicated to the ideal of Christian poverty, a constant theme among reformers of the clergy. However, these mendicant orders found it impossible to remain poor; so popular and successful did they become that they were showered with gifts and legacies and became rich and powerful. Consequently reformers arose periodically within these orders and strove to recall them to their pristine simplicity, humility, and poverty. Both the Franciscans and Dominicans distinguished themselves in the fields of education and learning. Many of the most distinguished philosophers, scientists, and theologians of the Middle Ages were members of these orders.

The Dominicans became especially prominent also in the work of the **Inquisition**, an ecclesiastical tribunal set up with the primary mission of seeking out and prosecuting cases of heresy. For this work they were called, in a Latin pun, *Domini canes* or the "Hounds of the Lord." The two orders became rivals; in the fifteenth century, when the question of the **Immaculate Conception of the Virgin** came to be a subject of debate within the church, the Franciscans espoused this doctrine, while the Dominicans opposed it.

The impact of the friars was profound. They came into existence at a time when religious ferment and questioning seemed to endanger the church, and they succeeded in guiding these currents into approved channels. In the great church of St. Francis at Assisi there is a fresco showing one of the popes, in a dream, seeing a vision of Francis upholding the tottering church. In time, the friars themselves became the objects of much criticism; Dante, for example, in the *Divine Comedy*, has some harsh things to say about them.

In spite of all the criticism of the religious, the ordinary layman

undoubtedly considered himself a faithful Christian. It has long been a historical cliché to refer to the Middle Ages as the *Age of Faith*, as though religious feeling dominated the minds of the masses. Such things, however, cannot be measured. Religious feeling may indeed have been stronger and more widespread than now, but there must also have been innumerable conventional Christians, who accepted without much reflection what the church taught them but who behaved in much the same way as they would have done if they had not been Christians. What we can surely say is that the influence of the organized church was greater than it is today. But the organized church and religious feeling are two separate things, sometimes, but not always, related to each other.

In any event, there was universal acceptance of the Christian interpretation of the nature of the universe and man's place in it. God had created man and woman perfect and placed them in an earthly paradise, endowed with freedom of the will to choose whether or not to obey Him. At the onset of temptation, they had disobeyed. This was the Fall, and it resulted in their expulsion from the garden and the loss of their free will. Henceforth, all the human race was tainted with the result of the first transgression, that is, with **original sin**. It was this sin that corrupted the will, so that man was no longer free to choose good and reject evil. In this state he could not hope for salvation. To redeem man from this desperate condition, God in His mercy sent His Son, both God and man, to redeem sinners and open the way of salvation. Thus Jesus had lived among men, suffered on the cross, risen from the grave, and ascended to Heaven. He left behind him the church, the body of Christ, to make available to mediate redemption to men, through the sacraments. Man's will was not completely in bondage to sin; he could cooperate with divine grace in the work of his salvation. Salvation was offered to all; each was free to accept or to reject it.

Those who rejected it were damned; they faced an eternity of torment in Hell. Those whose lives were outstanding for merit and holiness might be received directly in Heaven; that is, they might be saints. Most Christians, dying in the bosom of the church and duly repentant of their sins, went to **Purgatory**, where, as the word indicates, they were to be cleansed or purged of their sins. The growing importance of the idea of Purgatory had numerous effects on religious practices. The sacrament of penance came to be regarded largely as a means of reducing the amount of purgatorial punishment required for the penitent.

Those who were still alive on earth could help in various ways to shorten the period of purgatorial punishment for those who had died. One way was by praying for them; the souls whom Dante encounters in Purgatory

frequently ask him to convey to their surviving friends and relatives their desire for prayers. Endowments were established for priests to say Masses for the souls of the dead; in England these endowments were called *chantries*. One of the chief purposes of the foundation of monasteries was to have regular prayers for the souls of the founder and members of his family. One prayed to the saints in Heaven, but one prayed for the souls in Purgatory.

It was the idea of Purgatory that was responsible for the popularity and importance of **indulgences**. These came into use as a means of attracting men to participate in the Crusades, the series of expeditions which, beginning shortly before 1100, tried to wrest the Holy Land from the Moslem infidels and return it to Christian hands. To induce men to go on these expeditions to take the Cross, the popes offered full remission of sins to those who fell in battle. This was a **plenary indulgence** and amounted to a promise of immediate admittance to Heaven for those who gave their lives for the faith.

From this simple beginning, indulgences enjoyed a rather luxuriant development. Those who donated money for a Crusade might receive the rewards promised to those who went. Visitors to Rome during Jubilee years, the first of which was 1300, could receive indulgences. Indulgences might be granted for specific purposes, to specific territories, and might not be full indulgences but carry only the promise of the remission of a certain amount of purgatorial punishment. They might be hedged about with very careful restrictions and qualifications. However, the practice was undoubtedly corrupted by the increasing rise of the indulgence as a moneymaking device. Salesmen of indulgences were sent out, who in their zeal to attract buyers made extravagant claims which were eagerly swallowed by the simple. The buyers thought they were acquiring immediate tickets to Heaven without the need for repentance or change of heart.

These indulgences could also be purchased on behalf of the souls of the departed. The theory of a "Treasury of Merits," which developed from the thirteenth century, made this possible. According to this theory, the saints, while on earth, had performed good works beyond what was required for their own salvation. It was these good works that constituted the treasury, which was inexhaustible and at the disposal of the pope. It is not strange that the abuses of indulgences aroused objections among earnest Christians before Luther's protest against them; they appeared to make salvation mechanical and relieve the individual of responsibility for the state of his soul.

There were numerous beliefs and practices which, although approved by the church, were susceptible to abuse through ignorance or exaggeration -- for instance, the veneration of **relics**. A relic was an object which had been associated with a saint: an article of clothing perhaps, or the instrument of a martyr's suffering, or even a part of the body. While the church sanctioned the veneration of such relics as a way of fostering the desire to emulate the saint's virtues and holiness, it did not approve of the actual worship of such objects. Many persons, however, appear to have worshipped them, often in the hope of obtaining supernatural help thereby. Relics also were subject to abuse for monetary reasons. A church which had an impressive relic or collection of relics attracted pilgrims, who often left money. Numerous relics were spurious, some no doubt through ignorance but others as a result of deliberate deception. Erasmus commented wryly that there were enough pieces of wood from the cross on which Jesus had been crucified to build a ship.

But there was a deeper issue. Even if the relics were what they purported to be, and had indeed belonged to a saint, what benefit could accrue to the believer merely from viewing such objects? And was it desirable for people to leave their homes, families, and work to go on pilgrimages for long distances to see such relics? Always present was the danger of externalization of religion, and with the growth of the church into a powerful and complex machine, this danger increased. Hence the repeated call for a religion of the heart, an inward religion which would express itself in a cleansing of the soul and in works of love and service toward one's neighbor.

Popular religion contained a good many elements of superstition, some of which came down from antiquity. There was general belief in witches and their malign powers; the church itself upheld this belief and in fact did a good deal to perpetuate it. The air was filled with good and evil spirits, able to help or harm. The line between the natural and the supernatural was not clear, and men and women lived constantly in the presence of occult forces, against which their religion provided the best protection. Thus religion itself was often used as a sort of magic charm.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC CURRENTS

In the field of scholarship and learning, the Middle Ages invented the university. Universities began to come into existence in the twelfth century, arising out of existing institutions such as cathedral schools. A university was a guild (*universitas*), either of teachers, like the University

of Paris, or of students, like the University of Bologna. It was divided into faculties, each of which was responsible for a body of subject matter. The boy who entered a university (girls were not admitted) might be quite young, fifteen years old or even younger. He matriculated in the faculty of Liberal Arts, also called the philosophical faculty, where he studied first the trivium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. Successful completion of this program entitled him to the degree of Bachelor of Arts. From this he went to the quadrivium of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. Study of these subjects entitled him to the degree of Master of Arts, which was essentially a license to teach. He was then a member of the guild of teachers and could rent a room and advertise for students, who were expected to pay him a fee.

Many Masters of Arts, in addition to their teaching, went on to study in one of the "higher" faculties: medicine, law, or theology. There were two branches of legal study, **canon law** and **civil or Roman law**, based on the *Code of Justinian*. A student might have a degree in either law, or he might be a Doctor of Both Laws (J.U.D. or *Juris Utriusque Doctor*). The degrees of master and doctor were not distinguished then as they are today, but were more or less synonymous. Certain universities specialized in one subject or another: Bologna was noted for legal study, Paris for theology. Theology had the greatest prestige of any subject, and the theological faculty at Paris was the outstanding one in Europe: Its pronouncements on doctrinal matters had an almost official standing.

The development of universities was stimulated by a great increase in knowledge based on the Greek and Roman classics. Many classical works neglected in Europe for centuries began to come back into circulation in the twelfth century, reaching Europe from Arab sources. The Arabs had preserved the tradition of Greek learning during the centuries in which it had been largely lost to Europeans. Of particular importance were the writings of Aristotle, covering a large number of what we would now call scientific and philosophical fields. His prestige in the medieval schools was immense; when Thomas Aquinas referred simply to "The Philosopher," and when Dante mentioned "The master of those who know," it was not necessary to give his name.

Scholarship in the universities employed what is known as the **scholastic method**. This involved the use of a rigorous technique of logical reasoning starting with premises supplied by some standard authority. The authorities were relatively few in number; for theology, there were chiefly the *Bible*, the writings of the church fathers and the *Sentences* of the twelfth-century writer Peter Lombard. For secular fields of knowledge the classical texts

were widely used. When authorities appeared to disagree, the scholastic writers did not choose one and reject the other, but instead developed a technique for reconciling the apparent differences and explaining away the disagreement.

The scholastic method produced great works of synthesis, like the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-74). It encouraged close analysis of texts and fostered depth if not breadth of understanding. It ran the risk of degenerating into subtle and abstruse reasoning about things of minor importance, and of losing contact with the realities of the world what Francis Bacon was to call "the commerce of the mind with things."

It would be a mistake to think, however, that there was no interest in nature in the Middle Ages. Important investigation and speculation on scientific subjects were carried on, especially by some Franciscans at Oxford and by a group of Paris scholars in the fourteenth century. Such matters as gravity and motion were studied, and the way was prepared for the scientific revolution which started in the sixteenth century.

In art and literature the Middle Ages produced impressive monuments. It is interesting to recall that the word *Gothic*, applied to works of art, originally meant barbarous and was a term of disparagement. Today we recognize the so-called Gothic cathedrals as outstanding achievements in art, engineering, and religion. Even before the rise of Gothic, there were fine medieval structures in the style known as **Romanesque**, the English equivalent of which is called Norman. Romanesque or Norman architecture was capable of producing effects of solidity and grandeur, with its massive piers and round arches. It ran the risk of excessive heaviness, and its churches were likely to be dark and gloomy inside, because it had not solved the problem of introducing sufficient light. Since the walls supported the structure, they had to be very heavy, allowing little space for windows.

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To solve these problems the Gothic style was worked out. One of its most important accomplishments was to transfer the weight of the building from the walls to the **flying buttresses**. Since the walls no longer had to bear such a heavy burden, windows could be greatly enlarged. These windows were often made of stained glass, with magnificent effects of color and light. The rounded arch of the Romanesque gave way to a pointed arch, and churches became higher, with their vaults soaring far over the heads of worshippers. The piers were less massive than in the Romanesque. As a

result of all these changes, the Gothic cathedrals produced an effect of soaring, of aspiration toward the heavens. The solution of structural problems had made possible a greater expression of religious feeling.

Sculpture was also represented in these cathedrals. Some of the statues of saints and of characters from Bible history are vivid and lifelike, refuting any belief that medieval people were not interested in accurate observation of nature. This is further borne out by the decorative carvings of animals, fruits, and flowers, which also show a keen observation and love of nature.

Thus the cathedral provided a kind of synthesis of the arts. In the wide range of subject matter encompassed by the sculpture and especially by the stained- glass windows, these great buildings might be considered a synthesis of all medieval life and thought. There was a strong tendency in the Middle Ages toward such building of syntheses. The cathedrals are not the only evidence of this; Aquinas created a great synthesis of theology, and Dante, in his *Divine Comedy*, accomplished a feat analogous to these.

Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) is not easy to classify; possibly none of the greatest men are. More than any other individual he embodies the philosophical, theological, and literary currents of the Middle Ages, but in some ways he looks forward to a later period. He was a Florentine of noble birth who took an active part in the political life of his native city until, in 1302, the faction to which he belonged was defeated, and he became an exile, with a price on his head. He never returned to Florence, although in later years he could have done so in safety, because he would first have been required to undergo a public ceremony of expiation. He would never admit that he had done anything that required forgiveness, and so he preferred to endure the humiliation and loneliness of exile rather than return to the city which alone he thought of as his home.

[DANTE
ALIGHIERI]

This proud, austere man was familiar with all the intellectual activity of his time, and was further endowed with extraordinary depth of thought and feeling, together with poetic genius. He called his great poem the Comedy; a later generation called it divine. The subject of the *Divine Comedy* could not be broader in scope or more sublime; it is the journey of the individual soul through Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven. This at least is its story, but there are numerous other levels of meaning, conveyed by allegory and symbol, so that Dante is able to deal with all of his deepest concerns and indeed with

all the most significant issues of his day.

The poem tells of Dante himself, lost in a dark forest and threatened by wild beasts, rescued by the Roman poet Virgil, who was greatly revered in the Middle Ages because of a mistaken notion that he had foretold the coming of Christianity. Virgil guides Dante first through Hell (the [Inferno](#)). Here are all the sinners who are condemned to eternal torment, with the type of suffering always appropriate to the transgression. In addition to figures from the Bible or from Greek and Roman antiquity, there are many from more recent times, including some known personally to Dante. A number of popes are in Hell. Hell is located beneath the earth, in a series of circles through which Dante and his guide descend to the bottom, at the center of the earth. In the prevailing geocentric view of the cosmos, this is the center of the universe. Here, frozen in ice, Satan holds in each of his three mouths one of the blackest sinners of all mankind: Judas, who betrayed the Lord, and Brutus and Cassius, who betrayed Caesar. In this way Dante shows his reverence for the divine mission of the Roman Empire, of which Caesar is the symbol.

Near the beginning of their journey, Virgil leads Dante to Limbo, where he meets the great figures of antiquity. Since they lived before Christ, they were never able to receive Christian baptism. They must therefore remain forever cut off from the presence of God, though they are not subject to actual physical torment. Here Dante shows a greater severity than some of his contemporaries. In Limbo, Dante is introduced to the great poets; in addition to Virgil, there are Homer, Horace, Lucan, and Ovid. Among them, says Dante without false modesty, "I made a sixth."

From the terrors of Hell, Virgil leads Dante to [Purgatory](#), where the souls of those who died repentant are expiating their sins. Purgatory is a place of punishment and hope; those who have been sent there will reach Heaven in due time. For the final journey to Heaven, Virgil must turn Dante over to another guide. The great Roman poet, as we have seen, is shut out from God's presence. In his allegorical meanings, Virgil represents human reason or philosophy, which cannot by itself lead to God. For this, grace is required. The embodiment of grace, and of theology, is another real person, Beatrice. From childhood, Dante loved from afar Beatrice Portinari, who appears in his work in a glorified form as the bearer of his highest ideals. Now she leads him through [Paradise](#), where he meets many of the great saints. When these saints discuss those still on earth who should be their followers, they become filled with indignation. Thus Peter castigates the popes, and St. Francis and St. Dominic express their disappointment over

their own unworthy followers. The climax of the poem comes when Dante, under the guidance now of St. Bernard, receives a beatific vision of the Trinity itself, and the poem concludes with an invocation of the Virgin Mary. Each of the three main sections of the *Divine Comedy* -- "Inferno," "Purgatory," "Paradise" -- ends with the word stars. In the course of his poem, Dante deals with a vast array of subjects. He treats the urgent theological and philosophical problems of his age. He reveals the nature and arrangement of the universe as it appeared to educated men. He discusses developments in poetry, and pays tribute to his predecessors in the field. He draws on classical history and literature, showing how much was known about antiquity. And he concerns himself with the history of Italy and Florence in recent times, showing how strongly he feels about developments there. Throughout, he manages to tell us a good deal about himself what sort of man he was. He emerges as a highly developed, self-conscious individual, aware of his own greatness, very much his own man, somewhat isolated, and, although highly critical of church and papacy, deeply religious.

Even as Dante wrote, forces were at work that were to cause the dissolution of medieval civilization. These forces will be the subject of our next chapter.



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CHAPTER 2

THE BREAKDOWN OF MEDIEVAL CIVILIZATION (1300 - 1500)

When a new historical epoch comes to birth, the travail is likely to be painful and prolonged. Our own century appears to be such a time; our discomforts arise partly from our position in an age that we know is dying while we are in the dark about what will emerge. This should give us some understanding and fellow feeling for the people of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Europe, who also lived in an age of crisis and upheaval, as the old yielded to the new. The distresses of the time resulted largely from the desperate resistance of entrenched ideas and institutions to the thrust of the different and unfamiliar. The changes that run through these years were hastened by a purely accidental occurrence, the Black Death that struck in the middle of the fourteenth century. Plagues or epidemics were not uncommon; what distinguished the Black Death was its severity. The disease was apparently the bubonic plague, carried by rats. It may have come from outside Europe, on ships landing in European harbors. It started in 1348 and swept through western Europe. Some areas were little affected by it, but where it did strike it

carried off tremendous numbers of people. Statistics are not available for this period, but there were places where as much as a third of the population died. The incidence of the disease varied with social position; the poor city workers, crowded together in unsanitary conditions from which they could not hope to escape, suffered the greatest number of casualties. The well-to-do, living in much more healthful surroundings and able to get out of the crowded cities like the company of young men and women who told each other stories in Boccaccio's *Decameron* had a much better prospect of survival.

After the initial impact of the plague, which had exhausted itself by 1350, the disease remained endemic, recurring in some places until the seventeenth century. Until its first appearance, Europe had been experiencing a consistent growth in population. This growth was now checked, and it was not until the sixteenth century that population reached its former levels and continued. The plague was not the only factor that depressed the growth of European population. From about 1350, western Europe generally experienced depressed business conditions, and this economic decline also lasted until the sixteenth century. The economic slump was partly result, partly cause, of the other disturbed conditions of the time.

The church passed through a period of severe strain. One of its problems was the prevalence of abuses, of

which people were becoming increasingly conscious. Those reached all the way to the top; hence the cry for a reformation "in head and in members." Many of these abuses were intimately connected with the wealth of the church. The fiscal system of the church was highly developed, more so than those of contemporary secular governments. Christendom was divided into collectorates, each with a papal collector backed by formidable authority from the pope. Numerous payments had to be made to Rome, mostly by the clergy, who then got it back in one way or another from the laity. The latter had their own payments to make to the church: tithes, fees to the church courts, and in some countries a direct tax called Peter's Pence. Priests were often criticized as greedy and extortionate. As economic conditions worsened and the misery of the poor increased, social protest reinforced complaints against the clergy. It was unbearable that the sheep should be shorn for the benefit of their unworthy shepherds. The wealth and luxurious living of bishops and other prelates were a constant offense, and in the violent uprisings of the period this was a familiar grievance.

Rich clergy were likely to be worldly another source of discontent. Many earnest people felt their spiritual needs were not being satisfied by the vast impersonal mechanism of the church and by a priesthood that was to a large extent either indifferent or incompetent. Many bishops and priests were absentees, enjoying the fruits of their offices while leaving the actual work

to underpaid and uneducated substitutes. Some of the parish clergy were ignorant of even the rudiments of their faith, and some were illiterate. Many did not understand the Latin which they had to use in the services.

Absenteeism from parishes went hand in hand with pluralism; many members of the clergy held several positions at the same time. The church suffered from the fact that powerful laymen controlled a great many appointments, and awarded them on the basis of nonreligious criteria. Kings normally had a great deal of influence in filling church offices in their domains, and they tended to make their selection on the basis of family connections, personal friendship, or political considerations. A rich bishopric was considered an appropriate reward for administrative or diplomatic service.

One of the worst abuses was simony, the buying and selling of church offices. (For the origin of this word, see the Biblical story of Simon Magus, who tried to buy the gift of the Holy Ghost, Acts 8.) As the financial needs of the papacy grew, simony came to be increasingly resorted to as a revenue-raising device. In fact, every office to which the popes had the right of appointment had its own established price; with the passage of time the popes reserved more and more appointments to themselves, thus increasing their sources of income. They even sold expectatives, the right to hold an office at some future date when the

incumbent no longer occupied it. An expectative might be purchased which entitled the buyer to hold an office after it had been vacated by the person who held the first expectative, and so on. Since these offices were purchased for money, they were expected to produce a financial return for their holders. Because of growing frustration and dissatisfaction with formal religion, movements sprang up in the late Middle Ages to provide a richer and more satisfying spiritual life. These movements, which provide part of the background of the Protestant Reformation, are discussed in connection with that movement.

While these conditions were weakening the church from within, there were also external forces which threatened it. Among these the most dangerous were powerful monarchs in developing nations who were determined not to submit to external authority and were supported by the patriotic feeling of their people. The problems that popes, with their claims to supranational authority, would be meeting from this source are well illustrated by the famous quarrel between the French king Philip IV, known as Philip the Fair, and Pope Boniface VIII, around the beginning of the fourteenth century.

The question of the powers of the church and of earthly authority and their relation to one another had been fought out for hundreds of years in the realm of theoretical writings and in concrete cases. Popes had claimed superiority over secular rulers, sometimes

using the figure of the two great lights mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis. The "greater light" was the church, and the "lesser light" the civil power or state. The conflict of Philip the Fair and Boniface VIII was a practical one with theoretical implications.

The practical issue which precipitated the break was the desire of the king to tax the French clergy. The church traditionally claimed that it could not be taxed without its own consent, though it sometimes made "free gifts" to the crown. In the course of the struggle, Boniface issued in 1302 the bull *Unam sanctam*, which contained the most extreme assertion of papal claims to superiority that had ever been issued. In this bull the pope asserted in strong terms the primacy of the spiritual authority over the temporal, and stated that every human soul depends for its salvation on the pope.

This remarkable declaration of papal authority did not correspond with the actual facts. So low had sunk the reverence offered to the sacred person of the pontiff that in the following year, 1303, Boniface was seized and briefly held prisoner in the little town of Anagni by a combination of his French and Italian enemies. Though soon released, he died a short time afterwards.

At this point, when the papacy needed all the strength it could muster to face the power of the emerging European states, it weakened itself through a succession of catastrophes which lasted for over a

century. First of all, from 1309 to 1378, the popes did not live in Rome. In 1305 a French pope was elected, and in 1309 he moved to the city of Avignon which, though not technically part of France, was completely surrounded by French territory. When he died, a French pope was chosen to succeed him, and French popes continued to be elected and to live at Avignon for several decades. The College of Cardinals came to be dominated by Frenchmen, and pope and cardinals incurred the charge of being unduly influenced by the kings of France. Dante pictures the papacy as the harlot of the French king, and Petrarch inveighed against Avignon, where he lived in his youth.

Certainly Avignon was a more comfortable place to live in the fourteenth century than Rome, torn by the strife of warring factions. Nevertheless, the papal desertion of Rome roused bitter protest. It was particularly unfortunate for the popes to identify themselves with one of the states of Europe at a time of rising national feeling. This identification was bound to be deeply offensive, especially in those countries which were unfriendly to France. England was at war with France much of the time; the Hundred Years' War started in 1337. Englishmen were outraged that the popes were so closely associated with their country's enemy. In Germany, the popes gave offense by their intervention in the affairs of the Holy Roman Empire. Such intervention was nothing new, but now it helped to bring about a virtual declaration of German independence. In 1356, the Golden Bull, which made

into law the system of choosing the emperor by a college of seven electors, made no reference to papal approval in the electoral process. By thus ignoring the popes, who had always claimed that no man was emperor without their approval, the German princes served notice that henceforth they intended to conduct their political affairs without papal sanction.

The period during which the papacy was resident in Avignon is known as the "Babylonian Captivity." One of its results was a loosening of the hold of the popes on their Italian domain, the Papal States. Local tyrants were able to assume power in many of the cities, and the French officials sent by the absentee pope roused strong resentment. In the 1370s, revolt broke out in the Papal States, abetted by Florence, which was at war with the pope from 1375 to 1378 (See Chapter 3, The Italian City-States of the Renaissance). It was this threat to the pope's temporal power rather than any purely religious motives that impelled the return of Gregory XI to Rome in 1377.

It is possible that Gregory XI was planning to abandon the inconveniences of Rome and return to Avignon when death overtook him in 1378. Since he died in Rome, the rules of the church required that his successor be elected there. During the conclave the palace where it was taking place was surrounded by a mob clamoring for a Roman pope. The cardinals did not altogether give in to this demand, nor did they choose one of their own number, but they did at least

pick the first Italian pope in over seventy years. He was the archbishop of Bari, who assumed the papal name of Urban VI.

Urban proved unsatisfactory to the cardinals; he was arbitrary, lacking in tact, and believed in reform, which would have deprived the cardinals of some of their income. Therefore, they met, alleged that Urban had been elected under duress because of pressure from the mob, declared him deposed, and chose another pope, who called himself Clement VII. Urban refused to yield, and Clement eventually returned to Avignon.

The period from 1378, the year of Clement's election, to 1417, when the papacy was finally reunited, is known as the Great Schism. It was one of the most serious scandals in church history, with two (later three) claimants to the papacy. It was also a crisis of conscience for Western Christians, faced with the dilemma of having to decide who was truly the successor of Peter. The moral and spiritual authority and prestige of the Holy See, already weakened, was further undermined. Each of the European states had to make a choice as to which pope it would recognize. For a while, the French monarchy took the unheard-of step of refusing its allegiance to any pope.

Financial abuses in the church were intensified as a result of the Great Schism. Each of the rival popes possessed a much diminished allegiance, and consequently a narrower revenue base. To maintain his income at something like the normal level, he had

consequently to make greater demands. The general awareness of abuses, and the call for basic reforms, became greater than ever. At the same time, the existing structure of church government was subjected to close scrutiny, and radical changes were suggested, with the leading role being taken by scholars at the University of Paris. It was now proposed, in essence, that for the pope's headship of the church there should be substituted the authority of a general or ecumenical council. General councils had met from time to time since the Council of Nicaea in 325, and their pronouncements were regarded as authoritative for the church. However, they had met sporadically, not at fixed intervals. By the time of the Great Schism, they could be convened only by the pope.

Now it was proposed to make the council a permanent body, meeting regularly and serving as the highest governing body in the church. There were various ideas as to how the council should be constituted. Some of the more radical theorists proposed that laymen should be admitted to membership, and the suggestion was even made to allow women to take part. What it amounted to, in political terminology, was an attempt to replace the papal government of the church with a more representative polity. The papacy would not need to be abolished; the pope could remain as the chief administrative officer of the church, carrying out policies determined by the council. Underlying these ideas was a conception of

the church as consisting of the whole body of Christians, instead of the common idea that the church meant the clergy.

Other reform ideas were increasingly voiced at the same time. In protest against the great wealth of the church as a whole and of some of the clergy, a return to apostolic poverty was called for. One manifestation of this protest was the rise of a group in the Franciscan order called the Spiritual Franciscans, who agreed to a return to the practice of poverty as enunciated by the founder of their order. The Spiritual Franciscans were officially condemned as heretics by decretals of Pope John XXII in 1322-23. One of this group's prominent members was the Englishman William of Ockham, an important philosopher and a proponent of the conciliar theory of church government.

Ockham himself was condemned specifically as a heretic, as was his contemporary, the Italian Marsilio of Padua (1275/80-1342), author of the famous book *Defensor pacis* (The Defender of Peace). Marsilio argued for a more representative government both in church and state, and claimed that the church, as a spiritual body, had no right to any coercive power. Its job was to show men how to attain salvation, not to administer earthly punishments. The property of the church is held as the gift of the state and is, therefore, revocable. Similarly with offices in the church: even the pope, if unworthy, can be deposed by the secular

arm. The ultimate source of authority is the people. Marsilio's book, startlingly modern in some of its ideas and proposals, is one of the most remarkable productions of the Middle Ages.

The Great Schism, which helped provide the occasion for all these radical ideas, could have ended at the death of any of the competing pontiffs; all that was needed was for his cardinals to acknowledge his rival. However, what actually occurred was that on the decease of each of the rival popes, the cardinals chose a successor, no doubt partly to protect their own vested interests.

Although the various popes often pledged themselves to work for the reunification of the church, nothing came of this pledge. Finally, a group of cardinals from both obediences determined to put an end to a situation generally recognized to be intolerable. They called a general council to meet at Pisa in 1409 and summoned the rival popes to appear and have the validity of their claims adjudged. There was a legal difficulty about the Council of Pisa from the outset, because it was not summoned by the pope. The two popes ignored the summons, and the council solemnly pronounced them contumacious and issued formal sentences of deposition against them. It then proceeded to elect a new pope, who took the name of Alexander V.

The problem of the divided papacy remained unsolved. If anything, it grew worse, because now

there were three claimants to the papal throne. The Council of Constance (1414-17) was able to end the schism because rulers and peoples everywhere were willing to abandon their obedience to whichever pope they supported in order to restore unity, and because of the diligent efforts of the Holy Roman emperor Sigismund (1410-37) to this end. With the emperor's backing, the council deposed one pope and succeeded in getting one to abdicate his claims. The third, who never gave up, was abandoned by all the states that had supported him, and spent the rest of his life still claiming to be pope though virtually nobody paid any attention.

In 1417 the council chose as pope a member of the great Roman family of Colonna, who took the name of Martin V. Before choosing him, the fathers at Constance were faced with a crucial decision: Should they inaugurate the much needed reforms in the church before electing a pope, or should they elect a pope first and trust him to carry out the reforms "in head and members"? In the end, it was the latter road that they decided to follow, and with fateful results. As pope, Martin evinced little enthusiasm for reform, and lost what was perhaps the last best chance to reform the church from within before the outbreak of the Protestant Reformation.

The Council of Constance signifies the high-water mark in the conciliar movement. Its decree *Frequens* was called by J. N. Figgis, a famous student of the

history of political theory, "The most important constitutional document of the fifteenth century." It provided for regular meetings of the general council of the church, the next session to be held in five years, the following one in seven, and others at ten-year intervals thereafter. The decree *Sacrosancta* officially declared the general council of the church to be superior to the pope.

There was another area in which the council was active: that of heresy. It condemned the teachings of John Wycliffe and burned at the stake John Hus and his follower Jerome of Prague. More will be said about these matters shortly. In accordance with the decree *Frequens*, other councils met during the next few years at the specified intervals, the most important of them being the Council of Basel, which opened in 1431. From the first it was involved in a power struggle with Pope Eugenius IV, who, like other popes, was not prepared to abdicate supreme headship of the church. Although the council lasted for many years in one form or another it went on until 1449 and even chose an antipope in its struggle against Eugenius, in the long run it was the papacy that won out. By the middle of the fifteenth century the conciliar movement, as a means of changing the governmental system of the church, was dead. Thus the monarchical principal was retained, though the doctrine of conciliar supremacy was a most convenient weapon in the hands of such monarchs as the kings of France in their recurrent battles with the papacy. If we seek the causes of the

failure of the councils, one factor that stands out is the rising spirit of nationalism in Europe. Success of the conciliar movement depended on the ability of representatives from many different nations to work together in regulating the affairs of the international church. This was no longer possible, because national feeling had begun to throw up walls of distrust and rivalry between the different countries. Two of the most important, France and England, were at war throughout the entire conciliar period, for the Hundred Years' War did not end until 1453.

Each of the states preferred to seek separately the best bargain it could make with the church, and for this purpose, had to determine whether it could get a better one from the pope or the council. Normally it was the pope who was chosen, and this, in time, strengthened papal authority and weakened that of the council. One such arrangement was the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges, an agreement between the pope and the French king reached in 1438 during the period of the Council of Basel. In return for recognition of the supremacy of the pope over the council, the French church was released from the payment of certain dues to the pope, and gained a great deal of authority in the selection of its own officers, particularly the bishops.

The pope also gained strength when he persuaded representatives of the Greek church to meet with him instead of with the Council of Basel. The advance of the Ottoman Turks into eastern Europe, where they

conquered the Balkan peninsula and threatened Constantinople itself, frightened the Byzantine emperor into seeking defensive help from the West. No such help would be forthcoming unless a religious agreement could be reached between the Eastern and Western churches, severed for centuries.

Representatives of the Eastern Empire and church were ready to travel to the West to seek such an agreement, and received rival invitations to meet with pope and council. The pope's invitation was accepted, and in 1438 a council opened at Ferrara to work out a settlement between the two churches. An outbreak of plague in Ferrara caused the meetings to be moved to Florence in 1439. Because of their desperate military situation, it was the Greeks who had to give in and agree to a reunion on what amounted to western terms. This agreement was regarded as a shameful submission to error when it became known in the empire, and was, therefore, repudiated.

Constantinople was left to defend itself, and fell to the Turks in 1453. The problem of heresy, which concerned both the Councils of Constance and of Basel, had become by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries more serious than ever before. One reason for this is, again, the rising tide of national sentiment.

When heretics represented national resentment against the pope as a foreign power, the papacy was likely to be nearly helpless to do anything to check them. This was especially true of the two greatest heretics of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, John

Wycliffe in England and John Hus in Bohemia.
Wycliffe (c.1330-84) was associated with Oxford University as student, teacher, and preacher. In England, as elsewhere in the fourteenth century, national resentment against Rome was strong. This is clearly shown by the *Statutes of Provisors* and of *Praemunire*, enacted several times in the fourteenth century. *The Statute of Provisors* (1351) had the effect of denying the pope the right to make appointments within the English church. *The Statute of Praemunire* (1353) forbade the reception of papal documents in England without express royal permission, and cut off appeals from English ecclesiastical courts to the pope. Neither act was consistently enforced, but both were used by kings of England as bargaining devices in their encounters with the papacy. Nevertheless, they serve as an accurate expression of antipapal sentiment in fourteenth-century England.

These laws followed a well-established tradition; struggles between kings and popes and antipapal measures by king and Parliament had a long history in England. In 1365, all antipapal legislation was reenacted by Parliament. It must be remembered that at this time the English were involved in a war with the French and the popes were Frenchmen living in Avignon. In retaliation against this antipapal legislation, the pope demanded that England pay him the arrears in tribute that it owed him. Since the reign of John (1199 1216), the realm of England had recognized the pope as feudal overlord and was

obligated to pay him a yearly tribute of one thousand marks (a mark was two-thirds of a pound). The government had long ceased to make these payments, debts which the pope now tried to collect.

In this situation the government called on John Wycliffe to defend its refusal to pay the money. He was the appointed spokesman for the national resistance to the temporal power of Rome. His rejection of the papal claims to tribute from a secular state was in accordance with his idea of stewardship, which denied the concept of private property. The earth is the Lord's; those to whom is allotted the use of any part of it are stewards, who must justify their possession by the good use they make of it. On this basis the church can be deprived of any of its temporal possessions of which it is making improper use.

Wycliffe did not believe that the church should own any property or have any temporal power. Like Marsilio of Padua, he conceived of the church as a purely spiritual body with no other function than that of imparting a knowledge of salvation. It could not inflict punishments, including excommunication. As time went on, and perhaps influenced by the Great Schism which began in 1378, his views became more radical that is, they began to involve theological doctrines. To deny the right of the church to hold property or to wield secular power however distasteful such views were to the pope was not considered as subversive as the questioning of an established article

of the faith. Thus, when Wycliffe began to deny the doctrine of transubstantiation, many persons were horrified who before had supported him. In denying transubstantiation, he was attempting to undermine the special sanctity the church attributed to the priest; he was saying that the bread and the wine in the Eucharist, even after the priestly consecration, remained bread and wine, and did not become the body and blood of Christ.

He also held that popes could be deposed, and that there was no necessity for the offices of pope or cardinals. Attempts by the pope to have him tried and condemned failed because of the support he enjoyed in the highest levels of government. This support may have been to some extent withdrawn after his theological views became radical, but he was never molested.

Wycliffe believed that the Scriptures should be made available in the vernacular language. An English version of the entire Bible appeared during his lifetime and seems to have been very widely distributed and read. It is not clear how much Wycliffe had to do with this Bible. It was long believed that he was the translator, but today it is held that he took little if any direct part in the translation and that his share was probably confined to stimulating others to do the actual work. The work of spreading the English Bible was undertaken by the so-called poor priests who traveled throughout the country; it is no longer

considered certain that Wycliffe had very much to do with sending them out. His followers became numerous, at Oxford and elsewhere throughout the country. They were called "Lollards," an old word meaning "mumblers," which had been used for previous English heretics. The political situation in England soon brought about their suppression. In 1399 King Richard II was deposed and replaced by the Lancastrian Henry IV. Among the forces that had worked for the accession of the Lancastrians was the church. As a repayment for this support and a guarantee of further assistance, the new line of monarchs had to agree to the demands of the church for the prosecution of heresy. One of the results of this collaboration was the law *De haeretico comburendo* (On the burning of heretics) of 1401. Under this law, very few heretics were actually burned. After an abortive uprising in 1417, led by Sir John Oldcastle, Lollardy went underground. Currents of Wycliffite sentiment remained active, particularly among humble artisans, surfacing occasionally through court records when suspected heretics were brought to trial.

Meanwhile, the ideas of Wycliffe had gotten to Bohemia. There were good opportunities for the transmission of ideas between the two countries. Richard II's queen was a Bohemian princess, and many students passed between the English universities, Oxford and Cambridge, and the University of Prague, founded by Emperor Charles IV

in 1348. Although the ideas of Wycliffe helped to mold the Bohemian, or Czech, heretical movement, it is likely that the movement would have occurred anyway.

The movement in Bohemia was a revolt against the Roman church and an expression of Czech nationalism, directed particularly against the influence of Germans. All this is made clear in the career of its leader John Hus (1369-1415). As a preacher in the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, he gave sermons in the vernacular, in which he called for reforms in the church, including the lives of the higher clergy. As a professor in the University of Prague, Hus was prominent in a conflict between the Bohemian members of the university and the Germans who had dominated it. The outcome of the struggle was a Czech victory; henceforth, the Bohemian party was supreme in the university. A great exodus of Germans took place, one result of which was the foundation of the University of Leipzig.

Hus did not deny transubstantiation, but he was accused of doing so. He and his followers did, however, ask that both bread and wine be given to the laity in communion, instead of just the bread as was customary. Those who made this demand were known as *Calixtines* (from the Latin word for chalice or cup) or *Utraquists* (from the Latin word for both, meaning both bread and wine). Hus's following among his fellow countrymen became so great that the archbishop of Prague asked him to leave the city for

the sake of preserving public order. Hus complied with this request, going into the countryside where he continued to preach and work. From there he was summoned to the Council of Constance, with the promise of a safe-conduct from the Emperor Sigismund, which should have ensured good treatment at the council and enabled him to return home in safety.

When Hus appeared at the council, the emperor's promise was disregarded, and he was thrown into prison under conditions so bad that his health was undermined. Although Sigismund made some attempt at protest, he did not insist, fearing to antagonize the council, which he felt he needed. Hus, therefore, remained a prisoner until eventually he was put on trial before the council, convicted of heresy, and condemned to death. He was burned at the stake on July 6, 1415. To justify this act in the face of the emperor's promise of a safe-conduct (although the safe-conduct was never issued), the council issued an official statement that is it not necessary to keep faith with heretics.

The death of John Hus did not end the movement that he had led, but intensified it. Revolt broke out in Bohemia when the fate of the great leader became known, a revolt against both the Roman church and the emperor Sigismund, who was also king of Bohemia. The troops sent by the church and the emperor to crush the revolt were repelled, Sigismund

ceased to rule in Bohemia, and the rebels even went on the offensive and invaded Germany. Since it proved impossible to subdue the Bohemians, it finally became necessary to treat them somewhat more respectfully. They were invited to send representatives to the Council of Basel to discuss the theological points at issue.

The result was a compromise that gave the Bohemian church a special status. The most significant concession was the granting of the cup to the laity in the communion service. It is likely the Bohemian revolutionaries would have received even more concessions from Rome had they not split among themselves into an extreme party and a more moderate one. Peace was restored, and the government of Sigismund was once more established.

Thus the church came through the fifteenth century with its traditional government, doctrine, and abuses more or less intact. That it had been weakened in the process seems evident from its inability to cope successfully with the greater crises of the sixteenth century.

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

The late Middle Ages was an age of turmoil and conflict in secular and ecclesiastical affairs. International and civil wars characterized the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the most serious was the Hundred Years' War. England and

France were the chief antagonists in this struggle, which lasted from 1337 to 1453. The precipitating occasion for the war was the refusal of Edward III, king of England, to swear homage to Philip VI, king of France, for England's Continental possessions. The underlying cause was the existence of these English possessions on French territory. The war exemplified the incipient growth of nation-states and the accompanying spirit of nationalism or patriotism. It was also a stimulus to the further development of these nations and of the national spirit.

The war was fought on French soil, and for much of the time the advantage lay with the English invaders. The battles of Crecy (1346) and Poitiers (1356) were great English victories, won against superior numbers by an army that was more cohesive, better-trained, and equipped with more modern weapons than the rather undisciplined body of feudal knights that fought for France. At Poitiers the French king, John the Good (1350-64), was captured, and spent most of the rest of his life in England. France was further weakened by the reign of Charles VI (1380-1422), who was subject to intermittent bouts of insanity. Most of all, France suffered from internal conflict, combined with the rise of the powerful duchy of Burgundy. When John the Good named his son Philip duke of Burgundy, he unwittingly gave rise to a grave threat to French power. Philip, known as Philip the Bold, and his three successors followed a policy of expansion by means of marriage, purchase, and conquest that created a

powerful state situated between France and Germany, the most important component of which was the Netherlands.

Burgundy under its four great dukes became a center of wealth and culture. The Order of the Golden Fleece, founded in 1430 by Philip the Good (1419-67), was one of the most distinguished of all knightly orders. Cities noted for their trade and industry made the area one of the richest in Europe. Among these cities the most important included Bruges, Ghent, and Lige, with Brussels and Antwerp developing a little later. A great school of artists flourished, which will be more fully dealt with in Chapter 22. The dukes had a sincere interest in art and literature, encouraging and supporting them.

The successful policy of territorial aggrandizement, combined with economic prosperity, made Burgundy a factor to be reckoned with in European affairs. During much of the Hundred Years' War, the Burgundians were allied with the English against France, an alliance which, if continued, might have crushed the French ability to resist. The seriousness of the situation was not lost on the French government, which strove for a reconciliation with Burgundy and finally achieved it in 1415.

It was the desire of the dukes of Burgundy to free themselves from their feudal relationship of vassalage to the king of France and to set up a fully independent state. This dream came to an end with the premature

death in battle of Charles the Bold (or more accurately the Rash) in 1477. He left as heir only a daughter, Mary, who became the wife of Maximilian of Hapsburg, later to be Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I. In this way the bulk of the Burgundian domain became part of the Hapsburg inheritance, while part of it, including the original duchy of Burgundy, fell to the French. The reconciliation of France with Burgundy in 1415 did not mark an immediate recovery by France in the war against England. In the same year, the young king of England Henry V invaded France and won the battle of Agincourt. English successes over the next few years culminated in the Treaty of Troyes in 1420, which secured to England a large block of French territory. The treaty was sealed by the marriage of Henry and the French princess Catherine. Their son was to be recognized as king of both France and England. This treaty, if carried out, would have disinherited the dauphin Charles, son of Charles VI. Both Henry V and Charles VI died in 1422. The infant Henry VI, son of Henry V and Catherine, was recognized by one party as king of both England and France, while the hapless dauphin held only a part of southern France and was rather contemptuously referred to as the "king of Bourges." It was this dauphin, however, who was eventually to win out, less perhaps by his own talents than because of the help of others, which has given him the epithet of "Charles the Well-Served." The most remarkable of his helpers was Jeanne d'Arc, or Joan of Arc (1412 31).

Jeanne was a peasant girl from Domrmy in Lorraine who, though far from the scenes of battle, was deeply concerned about the fate of France. She became convinced that saints appeared to her while she was in the fields and announced to her that her destiny was to go to the aid of her country and, in particular, the dauphin Charles. She managed to make her way to Charles's court, where she succeeded in being given command of a body of French soldiers. With these troops she played an important part in lifting the siege of Orlans, a great victory for the French and an important factor in reviving their morale. After this, Jeanne's career was marked by continuing success for a while, until she had accomplished her great purpose, the coronation of Charles as Charles VII in the traditional ceremony at Reims. In 1431 she was captured by the Burgundians, who turned her over to the English. She was put on trial before an ecclesiastical court at Rouen, charged with heresy, witchcraft, and other offenses. Though the trial was ostensibly on religious grounds, it was in reality political. Her judges knew that she would have to be condemned; in the psychological atmosphere of the time, an acquittal would have convinced many that she did in reality have a divine mission and that God favored the French. The records of her questioning show that she was remarkably clever in meeting the arguments of her accusers, men of great learning and experience, in spite of her youth and lack of education. Nevertheless, the outcome of the trial was a foregone conclusion. Condemned to die at the stake as a

heretic, for a time she lost faith in her mission and recanted. But she soon recovered her nerve and reasserted her conviction that the saints had indeed sent her. She was, therefore, condemned again, this time as a relapsed heretic, and burned at the stake on May 30, 1431. In 1456 a new trial was held in which her name was formally cleared of the charges for which she had been condemned. In 1920 she was canonized.

The figure of St. Joan has proved to be a source of endless fascination and wonder. She appears not only in historical works but in drama and in opera as well. One reason for the perennial interest in her career is the mystery that surrounds it. How are we to explain her extraordinary successes and accomplishments? Was she really a saint, divinely inspired? Or was she a clever impostor? One proposition that can probably be accepted by most students is that she owed much of her strength to the national spirit that she represented, and to which she gave an abiding stimulus. Ever since her own time she has stood as an embodiment of the love of France. Although it still took many years to make France free of the English, the tide had begun to turn. The death of Henry V in 1422 left an infant on the English throne, a state of affairs that was invariably a source of weakness to any country. Already there had been signs of restlessness among the nobility and a desire to gain power at the expense of the crown, but Henry V had for a time successfully channeled these energies into foreign invasion. His death removed the strongest obstacle to the ambitions of the nobles, and

for several decades England was torn by civil war, as factions among the great families fought for the crown and the control of the state.

This period of civil strife in England is known as the Wars of the Roses. The contending factions were the houses of Lancaster, symbolized by the red rose, and of York, represented by the white rose. As Henry VI grew to manhood, it became apparent that he had inherited from his maternal grandfather, Charles VI of France, a tendency toward insanity, along with a mild and devout character. Under these conditions, it is not surprising that he proved unable to maintain order. Eventually the Yorkists gained the throne in the person of Edward IV (1461-70; 1471-83) and his brother Richard III (1483-85). At the battle of Bosworth in 1485, Richard was killed, and the crown passed to Henry Tudor, who as Henry VII opened a new era in English history.

All these events in England aided the French in the fight to drive the invaders from their homeland. By 1453, when the French recovered Bordeaux, the Hundred Years' War was essentially over, though the two countries continued to make hostile gestures and Edward IV staged a brief invasion in 1475, in alliance with his brother-in-law, Charles the Bold of Burgundy. Of all her possessions in France, which had at one time been so extensive, England retained only the port city of Calais with its surrounding country. Paradoxical as it may seem, both France and England

came out of the war strengthened in some ways, even though England had lost much territory and France, as the scene of the fighting, had suffered great devastation. The English had now to be satisfied with their island, but this meant a contiguous territory and a population far more homogeneous than would have been the case if it had included parts of France. It is highly likely that the English would eventually have lost their Continental possessions in any event. In time, the English would hold that their true field of growth lay outside Europe, and the loss of their Continental foothold may have hastened the day when this could become clear. As for France, she had not only gained a larger body of territory but also had strengthened her governmental institutions. During the war, the crown had acquired the right to levy direct taxes and to use these for the purpose of maintaining troops. These prerogatives were not lost at the end of the war, and so the French monarchy entered the sixteenth century equipped with two of the most important qualifications of the modern state: the powers to levy taxes and to maintain an army.

Both countries emerged from their long struggle with a heightened self-consciousness and a stronger sense of national and patriotic pride, brought about by the presence of a dangerous and easily identified enemy. War is one of the sources of nationalism.

SOCIAL UPHEAVAL AND REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS

Another indication that the fourteenth and fifteenth

centuries were witnessing the breakdown of an existing society and the birth of a new one is the prevalence of social protest and class struggle, often assuming the character of revolutionary movements. In England the question was asked, "When Adam delved and Eve span, / Who was then the gentleman?" A spirit of Christian egalitarianism began to spread, challenging the great discrepancies between rich and poor on the grounds of men's common status as children of one God. The wealth of the clergy was a particularly sore grievance.

After the Black Death the size of the laboring population was seriously diminished, and wages went up. The government attempted to hold down wages, and this generated discontent. Radical leaders like John Ball, Jack Straw, and Wat Tyler influenced the masses.

The climax was the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, which involved a broader section of English society than the name implies, since many of the London poor became part of it. The rebels gathered in many of the counties and marched on London, where their movement was joined by numerous apprentices, workers, and unemployed. Before they were pacified, they had sacked several noble houses and Lambeth Palace, the London home of the archbishop of Canterbury, and murdered the archbishop. To quiet them, King Richard II met them at Blackheath. Since they consistently claimed to be protesting, not against the king but

against his evil advisers, they allowed themselves to be satisfied with royal promises and they disbanded. After this, little if anything was done to meet their grievances, and the causes of their discontent remained. In some cases, their unhappiness may have made them Lollards, although it does not appear that Lollardy was one of the chief causes of the revolt.

In France the Hundred Years' War brought great suffering to the countryside, and waves of peasant discontent swept the country, particularly in the year 1358. This peasant unrest was called the Jacquerie from the nickname applied to the French peasant, Jacques Bonhomme. Another significant social development in France during the war was the rising importance of the city of Paris. In the years 1356-58, one of the leading figures in French political life was Étienne Marcel, who held the important office of provost of the merchants in Paris and for a while was master of the city, until he was assassinated in 1358. Under his leadership the interests and needs of the bourgeoisie, or town dwellers, made themselves heard at the highest levels of government.

Something analogous took place also in the flourishing commercial and industrial cities of the Low Countries. Here there was antagonism between the workers and merchants of the cities, on the one hand, and the noble class on the other. There were underlying economic reasons for this hostility, as can be most clearly seen in the case of Flanders. The

textile manufacturers and workers in the great Flemish cities were aware of their dependence on English wool, and inclined, therefore, to side with England, whereas the counts of Flanders tended to identify themselves with the interests of their overlords, the kings of France.

In 1302 there had occurred the Matins of Bruges, a bloody uprising of the workers of that city against the French and the count of Flanders. During the Hundred Years' War, these antagonisms were heightened. Under the leadership of Jacob van Artevelde and his son, Philip, the workers of Ghent offered serious resistance to the pro-French policy of the counts. The rise of the Arteveldes signifies something more than a split over foreign policy; like the career of tienne Marcel, it points to the emergence of a new factor in European society, the growing cities with their outlook deeply affected by the needs of business, industry, trade, and banking.

THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

To summarize the events described in this chapter, it is clear that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries western Europe was in the throes of a more or less continuing crisis. Tension and conflict within church and society, as well as between states, brought about constant unrest and disorder. The strong attachment of contemporary observers to the ideals of order and stability caused them to look on their times with gloomy foreboding.

The emotional atmosphere of the late Middle Ages has been brilliantly defined in the book, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, by the great Dutch historian Johan Huizinga. In this book he is particularly concerned with Flanders and France. It was a time, he says, when "a sombre melancholy weighs on people's souls."¹ There was an intense preoccupation with death. Depictions of the Dance of Death were common in woodcuts, drawings, and paintings. Over and over the theme was repeated that Death comes to all: Popes, kings, emperors are subject to it along with the humblest peasant.

Obsessed with the shortness of human life, the men of this age were also acutely aware of the transitory character of human beauty. "Where are the snows of yesteryear?" asked Francois Villon, reviewing the beautiful women of legend and history. In another one of his poems he has an old prostitute comparing her present repulsiveness with the charms of her youth.

There was a factual basis for the concern with death. Life expectancy was shorter, and infant mortality was high. Unsanitary living conditions, plague, poor or insufficient food, to say nothing of war and crime, all made the risks of life and the chances of death greater than they are now.

Religion was powerful in this age, but in a society breaking away from familiar moorings and obsessed with death it took some extreme forms. An apocalyptic

mood was common: Men had visions and dreamed dreams. Many thought that they were living in the last days of the world. A common theme of art in this period was the Passion, the most tragic of religious subjects; the suffering Jesus was emphasized rather than the glorified Christ. Religious devotion sometimes assumed abnormal forms, among them hysterical repentance and extreme ascetic practices, such as flagellation. But these acts of almost excessive piety might alternate, in the same persons, with orgies of sensual indulgence.

The ideals of knighthood, of chivalry, continued to receive lip service, but they were becoming increasingly anachronistic in the age of rising towns. The historian Froissart, writing about the events in France and Flanders during the Hundred Years' War, concentrates on the deeds of nobles and princes, regarding the movements among the city populations as a rather irritating distraction from the main events. There were no doubt many of his contemporaries who, like Froissart, failed to grasp the fact that what to them seemed of paramount interest belonged to a dying society, while the future was being shaped largely by forces that they either ignored or affected to disdain.



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CHAPTER 3

THE ITALIAN CITY-STATES OF THE RENAISSANCE

In studying the Renaissance, the student encounters problems that are not present with many other historical periods. The chief problem is that of defining what is meant by the word Renaissance itself. More will be said about this problem in Chapter 8, so that for the moment only a preliminary working definition will be required. Let us say that the Renaissance is the age of European history that marks the transition from the medieval world to that which we are accustomed to call modern. The Renaissance began in Italy and from there spread to transalpine Europe, where it was variously affected by the differing character and traditions of the countries to which it came. We start then with Italy. During the Middle Ages, Italy had remained in some ways different from the areas to the north of it, largely because of the persistence of the ancient Roman tradition. Italy was more urban, for one thing; vigorous towns existed there from at least the tenth century, taking advantage of every opportunity to shake themselves loose from the grip of their overlords and achieve virtual independence. This movement sometimes took the form of an uprising against a ruling bishop; at other times it might mean resistance to the claims of the Holy Roman emperor.

The growing spirit of self-conscious independence can be observed in the history of Milan, the greatest city in Lombardy, which asserted itself against archbishop, pope, and emperor. Because of its resistance to the claims of Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa, it was destroyed in 1162. Nevertheless, it was rebuilt in time to lead the Lombard cities in their great victory over the emperor's forces in 1176 at the battle of Legnano.

When trade began to revive in medieval Europe, giving powerful impetus to the growth of cities, the revival began in Italy. Some of the Italian cities became great centers of banking, commerce, and industry. Genoa, Pisa, and Venice early became important in the Mediterranean trade, and of the three, Venice, aided by the stability of her government, became the most prosperous. Florence became outstanding in banking and woolen manufacture. In the fifteenth century, Naples, Milan, and Venice ranked among the five most populous cities in western Europe. Numerous other cities grew and flourished, making Italy the most highly urbanized area in western Europe in the fourteenth century.

Feudalism had never been so firmly established in Italy as in the north. It was, therefore, relatively easy for the growing cities to expand into the surrounding countryside by subduing the nobles and annexing their land. In Italy, to a greater extent than was customary elsewhere, the land-owning nobles took up residence in the towns and became a part of city life. Within these towns and cities, political power belonged to the possessors of urban wealth, that is, to bankers, merchants, and businessmen. The political life of these cities was filled with struggles for power, and these struggles were intimately connected with the rise of new classes as the result of economic growth. When cities began to take control of their own affairs, they were usually ruled by an established governing class which had ties with the land and the feudal nobility, although members of this class might be engaged in business activity. With increasing wealth and prosperity, however, the members of the guilds, commoners by birth but often rich and powerful, demanded a greater share in government. The old ruling class might be called the *grandi*, or great men, while the guildsmen took the name of *popolo*, that is, the people. The name people is a bit misleading both because some members of this group were very rich and because the great mass of the population was really not represented in the so-called popular party.

The normal result of the conflict between *grandi* and *popolo* was the victory of the latter. This triumph of the "popular" party, in time, led to the rise of a despotism or one-man rule. In the Italian city-states, the *popolo*, in its struggle for supremacy, tended to choose as its leader a member of the opposing party, the nobility, and give him a title such as captain of the people. Once the party had won out, its leader would be likely to become head of the state. Having achieved this position, his next aim was to make his power absolute, suppressing all other sources of authority. If he was able to do this, he then proceeded to make his rule hereditary. In this fashion arose many of the ruling families in the Italian towns. The tendency toward hereditary despotism was universal, but it did not always come about in the manner just described.

Another source of despotic rule was the office of *podest*. This official became common around 1200, as a result of the intense factional strife that sprang up throughout the Italian towns. This strife was ferocious in its intensity; in their hatred of their political foes, men behaved like wild animals, going to any extreme of murder, torture, and treachery. To be defeated in a political struggle did not mean getting a minority of the vote and waiting for the next election; it was likely to mean being defeated in a political battle and then, if one escaped with his life, going into exile and conspiring with fellow exiles to seize power from the present victors.

In these circumstances many cities called in a *podest*, who was invariably a foreigner that is, he came from another Italian city and entrusted him with carefully defined powers for a limited period of time. He was not allowed to become associated with any of the local factions or to marry into any of the local families, and at the end of his term a year or six months his conduct in office was subjected to a thorough scrutiny. In spite of these

safeguards, some podests made their position permanent and hereditary.

The internal struggles were, at least in the beginning, connected with the rivalry between popes and Holy Roman emperors a rivalry of which Italy was one of the main prizes. In the Italian cities, the faction which sided with the emperor was known as the Ghibelline party; the adherents of the popes were called Guelfs. The terms, which may have come from the German Welf and Waiblingen, seem to have originated in Florence in the thirteenth century and from there spread to other areas. Thus there were Guelfs and Ghibellines in many Italian cities, and, since one side or the other eventually won out, there came to be Ghibelline cities, of which Milan is an example, and Guelf cities, most notably Florence. A defeated faction could, therefore, usually find refuge in a friendly city while it laid its plans for a return to power at home. With the passage of time, the original connection with pope or emperor came to be obscured, particularly since the emperors were not a serious force in Italian affairs from the death of Frederick II in 1250 to the reign of Charles V in the first half of the sixteenth century. The names remained, designating factions whose conflict rested on no basis of principle but simply on their desire for power. In the long run, neither pope nor emperor became dominant in Italy. Their agelong conflict did have the effect of enabling the Italian cities to achieve what amounted to total independence, though they might still acknowledge a nominal connection with emperor or pope. This statement must be qualified; as we shall see, independence was the prize only of those cities that were strong enough to hold it.

Another key to supreme rule in the Italian city-state was military command. By the fourteenth century, the citizens' army had given way to hired, or mercenary troops. This change was in part the result of internal class conflict; whichever faction won out in the struggle for power was reluctant to allow its defeated enemies to bear arms. The leaders of these hired troops were called condottieri (condottiere in the singular). Machiavelli, who was bitterly opposed to them, pointed out that if they lost, the city that hired them was at the mercy of the enemy; but if they won, the city was at the mercy of the condottieri themselves. This proved true in certain cases, most noticeably that of Milan, where Francesco Sforza, hired to defend the city against external dangers, turned on his employers and made himself master of the city in 1450. So by numerous methods and in a wide variety of constitutional forms, republican liberty was overthrown in the city-states of Italy, and some form of narrowly restricted, hereditary rule was established. Even in those states which preserved the name of republic Florence and Venice the reality was something quite different from the outward forms.

Constant conflict was the fate of these vigorous urban societies. In addition to the internal struggle, and the struggles for independence from emperor and pope, there was the constant fighting of the cities against one another. They fought for commercial supremacy, control of trade routes, access to seaports, territorial expansion, and possession of natural resources; like their internal conflicts, these intercity wars and rivalries were likely to be prolonged, bitter, and ruthless. Reference has been made to the

commercial rivalry of Genoa, Pisa, and Venice. Florence fought for centuries for control of Pisa and was frequently engaged in war with other Tuscan neighbors and rivals, such as Lucca and Siena.

A convenient way to trace the long-term results of these changes is to compare the maps of Italy in the mid-fourteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Numerous cities that were independent at the earlier date have been absorbed into the territories of larger and more powerful neighbors. A few relatively small states, for example Ferrara, Mantua, and Siena, have retained their independent status. However, Italy has come to be dominated by five great states: Venice, Florence, and Milan, the Papal States, and the kingdom of Naples.

A similar process of consolidation can be traced in the history of modern Europe as a whole. Between about 1500 and about 1900 the number of independent entities on the map of Europe greatly diminished, and by the latter date the European world was dominated by a half-dozen nations, which were referred to as the Great Powers. This parallelism of development indicated that, in the political field as in others, Renaissance Italy led the way into modern times. Within the limited confines of the Italian peninsula, one sees acted out the developments which would later unfold on the larger stage of the European continent, where the great nations would take over the roles of the city-states. This means that the relationships between the Italian cities exhibited the elements of international relations in modern Europe. Diplomacy is one. It was the Italians who first maintained permanent ambassadors in foreign courts, and some of the early Italian diplomatic representatives sent back to their home governments reports that are still of value today. Machiavelli's dispatches from his foreign missions show the acuteness of observation and penetrating judgment of that political genius. The Venetian ambassadors were particularly gifted, and their reports remain a valuable source of knowledge about the countries to which they were accredited.

Again as in modern Europe, there were recurrent crises caused by the efforts of one state to dominate all the others. About 1400, it was Milan which sought hegemony. A hundred years later, Italian states feared the expansionist tendencies of Venice. Numerous other aggressors, generally on a smaller scale, came and went. Finally, by the middle of the fifteenth century, a delicate equilibrium was reached, which, according to some historians, brought into play another principle of modern international relations: the balance of power. To interpret these developments, there were two sixteenth-century observers whose outlook was so free from traditional preconceptions that they can be called the first truly modern political thinkers. These men were the Florentines Machiavelli and Guicciardini. To give some flesh and bones to all these general observations, it is desirable to sketch the history of each of the five dominant states and to outline the careers and thoughts of the two great observers.

MILAN

Long before the Renaissance, Milan, the city of St. Ambrose, was one of the greatest of the Italian towns. In the eleventh century, it was an important area of conflict between pope and emperor, nobles and plebeians, conservatives and reformers in the church. It was also in the eleventh century that civil conflict brought about the beginning of the tripartite constitution of Milan; each of the three main classes had its own political organization. The three classes were the great nobles; the lesser nobles, or knights and squires; and the non-nobles or plebeians. Each of the three had its own council and officers, and the government of Milan developed into an elaborate working compromise between the classes. The chief officers of the plebeians were the captain and podest of the people. These officers, like similar officers elsewhere, became the stepping-stones to tyranny, in the hands of the family of Della Torre, the first despots of Milan, who dominated the city during much of the thirteenth century. They were leaders of the Guelf faction, opposed by the Ghibellines under the family of the Visconti. In 1277, Archbishop Ottone Visconti became lord of Milan and began one of the most famous of Renaissance dynasties. Later in the century, one of the Visconti was appointed by the emperor to be vicar of Lombardy; this connection with the emperors was to prove useful to the family in succeeding years. Early in the fourteenth century, after the Della Torre had returned to power, the visit of Emperor Henry VII to Italy was used by the Visconti to regain their dominant position.

Early in the fourteenth century the Visconti embarked on the policy of territorial aggression that became characteristic of their house. This brought them into constant conflict with the papacy. The popes invoked such weapons as excommunication and Crusades in the effort to subdue and intimidate them, but the Visconti remained defiant, continuing their expansionist policy whenever possible and building up a great territorial state. Among the most important acquisitions of the family were Pavia, Piacenza, Bergamo, Brescia, and Parma. Whenever possible, cities were acquired peacefully, by purchase or voluntary surrender. Attempts were made to acquire dominion over the great cities of Genoa and Bologna, but with only temporary success. At the same time the Visconti looked after the prosperity and security of Milan and became popular with their subjects, so that by the middle of the fourteenth century their role was recognized as hereditary.

The great period of the Visconti began in 1354 when two brothers, Galeazzo and Bernab, became joint rulers. Galeazzo received the western part of Milan and the western part of the Milanese possessions; Bernab received the eastern part of the city and the eastern part of its territories. In 1359 the brothers united to take Pavia, where Galeazzo set up his residence and founded a university. Pavia was to remain the second city in the Milanese domains. The prestige that the family had attained can be seen in the marriages of Galeazzo's children, who married into the French and English royal families. In 1378 Galeazzo died, leaving his domains to Gian Galeazzo, a young man of about twenty-seven. Meanwhile Bernab was ruling in Milan. He laid claim to twenty illegitimate

children (besides sixteen legitimate ones), was noted for the violence of his temper, worked hard at the business of government, and issued game laws of inhuman severity. He was said to have five thousand hunting dogs which he billeted on the citizens, who were liable to terrible punishments if any harm should come to the animals. Boars were Bernab's favorite game, and whoever killed one was either blinded or hanged. His justice, though ferocious, was praised, and he was thought of as the defender of the poor. A famous incident of 1361 illustrates his temperament as well as his relations with the papacy. When ambassadors from the pope were sent to him with a bull of excommunication, they found him on a bridge over the rushing water of the Lambro River. Receiving the bull, Bernab asked them if they wished to eat or drink: in other words, eat the bull or be thrown into the river. They naturally accepted the former alternative; one of them later became pope. Bernab's conflict with the papacy over possession of the city of Bologna meant that he lived under excommunication and that his territories were subject to the interdict or ecclesiastical censure.

After the death of his brother, Bernab desired to become ruler of the entire Visconti territory. The only obstacle was his late brother's son, Gian Galeazzo, who appeared to be a pious and quiet youth. But the outcome was just the opposite of Bernab's intentions: Gian Galeazzo tricked him, took him prisoner in 1385, and put him in prison, where he died not long afterwards. Gian Galeazzo then made himself the master of the entire Milanese state.

Thus was launched the career of the greatest of the Visconti, and one of the most remarkable political figures of the Renaissance. Like other princes of the time, he was a patron of the arts: The cathedral of Milan and the Certosa (Carthusian monastery) of Pavia were started in his reign. He purchased from the Holy Roman emperor the title of duke of Milan. His prestige is shown in the marriage of his daughter Valentina to a brother of the French king. One of the descendants of this marriage in time became king of France; this was the origin of the French claim to Milan, which was to have enduring consequences. He pursued the family policy of territorial aggrandizement with unprecedented success. He conquered many cities in northern and central Italy, and many others submitted to him peacefully. He employed not only the sword but also the pen: Paid propagandists extolled the blessings of Milanese rule. He was able to dominate northern Italy (except Venice) and much of central Italy as well, until the only enemy left in the field against him was Florence, to which he laid siege in 1402. Florence would surely have fallen had Gian Galeazzo himself not become sick and died in the same year. For the Florentines it was a great victory of freedom over tyranny; for Italy, it was the loss of perhaps the best chance of becoming unified during the Renaissance. Whether unity on these terms would have been worth the cost is a controversial matter. It has been asserted that the domination of Florence by Milan would have been a severe blow to the revolutionary cultural developments that were going on in Florence at the time. On the other hand, the results of the continued disunity of Italy were, as we shall see, tragic.

On the death of the great duke, his domains were divided among his sons, and his empire began to disintegrate, as many of the conquered cities resumed their independence and others fell under the rule of Venice. The oldest son, Giovanni Maria, who received the title of duke and the bulk of the territory, proved to have more than his share of the family streak of cruelty and was murdered in a church in 1412. Dying childless, he was succeeded by his brother, Filippo Maria, who was to be the last of the Visconti dukes, since he had no sons, but only an illegitimate daughter.

This able and cunning prince devoted himself to regaining his father's territories, and Milan once again became the great threat to the peace and freedom of Italy. Once again Florence became an enemy. Filippo Maria enjoyed a great measure of success, partly because he employed the best mercenary captains available, one of whom was Francesco Sforza, who eventually married the duke's daughter. When Filippo Maria died in 1447 without leaving any provision for the succession, a number of claimants appeared. The people of Milan proceeded to set up a republic and hired Sforza to defend it. Instead, he laid siege to the city and, in 1450, became its ruler, establishing a new dynasty. He was assisted by Florence, which, under the rule of Cosimo de' Medici, in this way reversed its long-standing anti-Milanese policy. Florence also helped Sforza in the ensuing war against Venice and Naples, and enabled him to hold on to his new state.

The Peace of Lodi of 1454, ending the conflict, became the basis of a league of all the Italian states, which maintained a precarious peace in Italy until 1494. Though there were conflicts during these forty years, they were all contained without foreign intervention on a large scale. Some historians have seen in this situation the first instance of the modern balance-of-power principle. During most of the time, a combination of Florence, Milan, and Naples worked to keep the peace. This is not a unanimous opinion, and at least one authority has claimed that the Italians owed their freedom from foreign intervention during this time to luck rather than statesmanship.²

Sforza ruled Milan successfully until his death in 1466, maintaining good relations with Florence and with France. From France he secured control of Genoa. In Milan he was careful to have his position, which he had gained by force, validated by an assembly of the people. His son and successor, Galeazzo Maria, was less fortunate. Though in some ways a good ruler, he showed tendencies toward absolutism, combined with such qualities as cruelty and extravagance. Three conspirators, inflamed by their study of the classics with a love for republican liberty, murdered him in church in 1476. The late duke left behind him an seven-year-old son, Gian Galeazzo, who became duke, and several brothers, one of whom was the famous Ludovico the Moor (an epithet which had nothing to do with his complexion). Ludovico was clever enough to be able to take over the real power in the state and to become, in fact though not in name, the ruler of Milan. He established one of the most brilliant of Renaissance courts, with Leonardo da Vinci and the great architect Bramante as its chief ornaments. He encouraged the University of Pavia, founded a college where Greek was taught, and fostered the prosperity of Milan by irrigation works.

In 1488 the young duke was married to a princess of the ruling house of Naples, and this marriage cast a shadow on Ludovico's security. The duchess resented her husband's (and her own) subordinate position; she wanted them to be duke and duchess in fact and not just in name. To this end, as Ludovico became aware, she intrigued for help with her family in Naples. This broke up the old alliance of Milan, Naples, and Florence, while the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent of Florence in 1492 removed an influence for peace. Ludovico negotiated with both Italian and non-Italian powers in order to protect himself from the danger posed by Naples, but the most fateful of his dealings were with the king of France, Charles VIII (1483-98). The French could claim the throne of Naples on the basis of the rule of the house of Anjou, in the thirteenth century, which will be discussed later. Ludovico encouraged the French king to come to Italy to make good this claim. As we shall see, this plan was only too successful; it brought the beginning of the invasions that were to end Italian freedom and subject the peninsula to foreign domination for centuries.

VENICE

From the very start, the history of Venice took on a special character, as a result of the city's location in the islands of the lagoons at the head of the Adriatic Sea. These islands were settled in the fifth century A.D. by refugees from the mainland, fleeing from Hunnish and German invaders. The fate of the city was bound up inextricably with the sea, in which it lived and from which it drew its sustenance in the form of trade.

Venice faced eastward, having close relations with the emperor at Constantinople. The Venetian merchants, from the tenth century, became the intermediaries between East and West. They received trading privileges from the Byzantine and German emperors, and even the Mohammedans. They supplied Italy, France, and Germany with the goods of the East and became rich and powerful in the process. Thus arose the Venetian merchant aristocracy, which in time took over the government of the city. In the sixth century, Venice was governed by tribunes, overseen by a duke, or doge. There was also an assembly of the people, which became powerless long before it was formally abolished in the fifteenth century. Until the eleventh century the doge's power increased, but it weakened until he became only the presiding officer in a state governed by a merchant oligarchy. The oligarchy exercised its power through a Great Council and a Small Council. The Small Council of six was a permanent adviser. The Great Council, which came to have well over two thousand members, was the seat of sovereignty, in which supreme power resided and from which other governmental bodies were formed. One was the Senate, which by the fourteenth century was the center of public administration, handling the day-to-day business of government.

The victory of the aristocracy was sealed by the "closing" of the Great Council in 1297.

The essence of this act was to restrict eligibility for the Great Council to the members of about two hundred of the great merchant families. This restriction of political rights caused some discontent, which led, in 1310, to a serious conspiracy against the government. It was successfully repressed, but led to the formation of the Council of Ten, which had the purpose of guarding against further attempts of the same sort. In time the council became a permanent part of the Venetian government and acquired control over all aspects of the administration. The Council of Ten gave to the government of Venice the outlines it has always had in historical imagination: silent, efficient, watching with untiring vigilance over the affairs of the state, and ferreting out and punishing with deadly and ruthless speed all attempted conspiracies. No public hint of its actions would be given until, one morning, passersby would see the bodies of the plotters hanging in the Square of St. Mark. The trials, though secret, were scrupulously fair, and judgment was based on a thorough effort to get the facts. The most famous conspiracy was that of the doge Marino Faliero in 1355. Like all the others, it failed, and the doge was executed. The chief activity of Venice was always trade, and this brought relationships, sometimes hostile, with commercial rivals in Italy, chiefly Genoa and Pisa, and sometimes with the Byzantine emperor at Constantinople. In the later years of the twelfth century, relations between Venice and the emperor in the East deteriorated. To recoup their position, the Venetians performed one of the most spectacular feats in their history. They diverted the Fourth Crusade, in 1204, from an attempt to regain the Holy Land to a successful attack on Constantinople, which for a while left Venice master of the Byzantine Empire. Venetian merchants were able to penetrate Russia, the Crimea, and Asia Minor.

In the second half of the thirteenth century, the great conflict began with Genoa, which was becoming a dangerous rival for the eastern trade. In 1294 Venice declared war, and in the following century there was constant conflict between the two cities. By 1381, peace was made, and Venice was enabled to regain her former prosperity. The Genoese, however, because of internal troubles and French domination, which began in 1396, found themselves at a disadvantage. In the thirteenth century, the Mongols conquered most of Asia, and Venetian merchants found their way to their dominions. The most famous was Marco Polo, who lived in the Mongol Empire as an official of the Great Khan from 1275 to 1292. The breakdown of the empire prevented other Europeans from following the same route.

In the fifteenth century Venice was at the height of its glory. Its wealth was enormous, and it had an empire extending in an unbroken coastline from the islands in the lagoons to Constantinople. Its gold coin, the ducat, minted since 1284, was valued everywhere for its sound, reliable worth. It was the greatest trading center in Europe. With a population of about one hundred thousand, it was one of the largest European cities. The stability and efficiency of its government were the envy of other states. The trading aristocracy looked after the commercial interests of the city with patriotic devotion, though not without a strong spirit of suspicion and distrust among themselves. The masses, though excluded from political life, shared in the general prosperity and were for the most part content with

their lot.

The sixteenth century saw the beginning of the long decline from this position of pride and splendor. One reason was the advance of the Ottoman Turks into eastern Europe, where they encroached on territories under Venetian control. The conflict between Venice and the Turks, which began in the early fifteenth century, was to continue for hundreds of years. When the Turks took Constantinople in 1453, the Venetian colony was destroyed, and many Venetians were executed, imprisoned, or sold into slavery. As the fighting continued, more and more Venetian territory was lost. By 1540 the Morea and most of the Greek islands had fallen.

When the Portuguese found an all-water route to the East late in the fifteenth century, they began their drive to take over the immensely lucrative trade in spices, which had been largely in the hands of the Venetians. From that time on, the Venetian position in that trade was more and more precarious, a situation that was aggravated by the entrance of the French, and later the Dutch and English, into the eastern trade. Though this was a serious blow, Venetian prosperity did not suddenly decline. In fact, the cargo-carrying capacity of the Venetian international merchant fleet actually grew in the sixteenth century. Before the end of the century, however, various factors combined to weaken the city's position: the continued war with the Turks, a severe outbreak of the plague, and the exhaustion of the supply of timber for shipbuilding.

From the fourteenth century Venice had been acquiring control over territory on the Italian mainland, a process which was greatly accelerated after about 1380. There were several motives: to secure routes of trade and the Venetian food supply, and, with the Turkish advance, to recoup losses in the East. The growing intervention of the Venetians on the mainland was highly unwelcome to the other Italians, who had long thought of Venice as a foreign state and now feared her power. In the latter part of the fifteenth century, Venice came to be regarded as the great threat to the peace and freedom of Italy, as had been true earlier of Milan. The aggressive policies of both Venice and the Visconti made it inevitable that Venice and Milan would become enemies. During the last years of Visconti rule, Venice allied with Florence against them, but with the coming of Francesco Sforza, as we have seen, Florence abandoned the Venetian alliance and aided the new ruling house of Milan.

By 1500 Venice controlled a vast area in northern Italy, and many important cities, formerly independent, were under her rule, including Padua, Verona, and numerous others. The result of her power and aggressive tendencies was, as we shall see later, to unite most of Italy and even some foreign states against her in the effort to break her power. Nevertheless, she remained independent, strong, and prosperous throughout the century. The decline we can observe was much less noticeable at the time. Long after the rest of Italy had been subjugated by Spanish power, Venice remained independent, until finally conquered by Napoleon at the end of the eighteenth century. The final fall of

Venice called forth the famous sonnet of Wordsworth. Though the glories of Venice had decayed by then, he wrote, "Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade / Of that which once was great is passed away."

In his sonnet, Wordsworth refers to Venice as "the eldest Child of Liberty," and indeed the Venetians did not lose sight of the fact that their city was a republic. Professor William J. Bouwsma has shown that the conscious expression of Venetian republicanism, though it has roots in an earlier period, came largely in the sixteenth century, under the impact of political crises which stimulated thought on the meaning of Venetian ideals and values. Here it was following the example of the other great Renaissance republic, Florence.

FLORENCE

Florence in the Renaissance was the home of a galaxy of men of talent and genius who find no parallel in history except in ancient Athens. A sketch of the history of the city cannot "explain" the presence of so many outstanding individuals nothing can do that. It can only present some idea of the conditions in which they flourished.

From at least as far back as the eleventh century we can discern some features of Florentine history that were to remain fairly constant. The governing class at this time consisting of small nobles and rich merchants was divided by bitter conflicts among its members; the city was expanding into the surrounding countryside, and it was coming into conflict, economic and military, with neighboring cities. The struggle with Pisa was to last for centuries. Until 1250, when the last great medieval emperor, Frederick II, died, Florence had to struggle against the attempts of emperors to assert lordship over the city. That none of these struggles prevented Florence from prospering is shown by the coinage in 1252 of the gold florin, which became a medium of international exchange, like the Venetian ducat already mentioned, because of the consistency and reliability of its gold content. The Florentine coin may not be the earliest gold coin created in this period; at about the same time, and perhaps a little earlier, Genoa began issuing its first gold coins. In the next century, the example was followed not only by other Italian cities but by the states of Europe, testifying to a general revival of trade and economic life.

During the struggles between Guelf and Ghibelline factions in Italy, Florence became a Guelf city, which means that it was on the side of the papacy in its struggle against the empire. This alliance with the popes, which became traditional, secured for the Florentine bankers the banking business of the papacy, and for the Florentine merchants special privileges in areas in which the popes had particular influence. The growing prosperity of the Florentine class of merchants and bankers eventually enabled them to take over the government of the city in 1282-83, from an old ruling class, that of the magnates, weakened by its own internal disunity.

The new ruling class, called the popolo, or people, was divided into guilds. There were twenty-one of these, consisting of the seven greater guilds and the fourteen lesser guilds. The members of the greater guilds were commonly known as the popolo grasso, or fat people, as distinguished from the popolo minuto, or little people, who belonged to the lesser guilds. It was the former who dominated the government of Florence from this time on, though the popolo minuto were allowed some authority. Among the greater guilds were those of the wool manufacturers, the wool finishers, the silk merchants, and the bankers. As the instrument of their domination, they established an executive body of six priors (the number was later increased to eight). Their term of office was two months, and they came to be chosen by lot, according to a system that strengthened the hold of the greater guilds. This fact, combined with the short term of office, helped to place real power securely in the hands of the great merchants, manufacturers, and bankers. Thus Florence, though bearing the name of a republic, can with more justification be called an oligarchy. There was also a large class with no political power whatever, the workers, especially those employed by the wool manufacturers. They were not members of any guilds, were forbidden to form guilds of their own, and were the worst sufferers in time of economic depression. They were one of the earliest examples of a modern industrial proletariat. Their discontent might break out from time to time, but they never succeeded in acquiring permanent political status.

The victors of 1282 consolidated their position by means of the Ordinances of Justice of 1293, which penalized the members of the former ruling class of magnates. A gonfaloniere (standard-bearer) of justice was established as the seventh prior and chief of the priors, with the function of executing sentences pronounced in court against the nobles. He was given a force of a thousand men to assist him in this purpose. Furthermore, nobles could not be elected priors or hold office in the guilds, and they were severely punished for crimes against members of the popolo. Though some of these restrictions were later lifted in 1295 nobles were given permission to become priors if they were guild members there remained a permanent stigma on the nobles. Some members of the class formally renounced their noble status, and one way to attack political enemies henceforth was to have them officially declared magnates.

The Guelfs, now victorious in Florence, did not remain united, but split into the Black and White factions. With the help of Pope Boniface VIII and a French prince, Charles of Valois, whom he sent to Florence in 1301, the Blacks won out, and the Whites were savagely persecuted. Many went into exile, including Dante and the father of Petrarch. Since the second half of the thirteenth century, popes had been calling in members of the French royal family to defend papal interests in Italy. This established one of the precedents for the later disastrous invasions of Italy.

In about 1338, Florence had reached a peak of prosperity. According to the chronicler Giovanni Villani, the population was about ninety thousand, making Florence one of the largest cities in Europe. Its wealth, based largely on woolen cloth, was immense. It is also

true that Florentine bankers were among the greatest of all, involved in far-flung transactions. This fact was to be one of the causes of the great disasters which befell the city during the fourteenth century, for the two greatest banks, those of the Bardi and Peruzzi, had loaned money to the king of England, Edward III, who defaulted in 1339, thus weakening the whole financial structure of the city. Meanwhile a war against Lucca, which was going badly for Florence, was costing so much that the government was forced to suspend payments on its loans, thus deepening the financial crisis. Possibly in an attempt to avert disaster, the city called in a member of the ruling family of Naples, Walter of Brienne, duke of Athens, to take temporary charge of the affairs of the city. (On previous occasions members of this family had been given temporary authority in Florence.) Walter arrived in 1342, tried to make himself a tyrant, and was driven out in 1343 in an uprising that united the various elements of the population.

Not long afterwards, a successful rising inaugurated an interlude of thirty-five years during which the lesser guilds exercised the dominant power in the city. It was a period of factional and class struggle, of conflict abroad, and of the reversal of the old alliance with the papacy, which culminated in the War of the Eight Saints, from 1375 to 1378, when Florence and the pope were actually at war. At the beginning of the period, in the 1340s, two catastrophic events helped to shatter the well-being of the city. The weakened financial structure finally collapsed, when the Bardi and Peruzzi went bankrupt, dragging many other firms down with them. In 1348 came the Black Death, which may have killed as many as fifty thousand Florentines. These disasters contributed powerfully to the internal strains in Florence during the following years.

The poor, as always, suffered most from economic depression and plague, and these factors helped to swell the discontent among the unenfranchised workers. This discontent came to a head in 1378 in the so-called Revolt of the Ciompi, a rising of the workers, especially the wool carders. It enjoyed a brief success, and for a few years the workers were able to form their own guilds and exercise some political power. This episode ended in 1382, when the *popolo grasso* seized by force the power they had originally acquired just a century before. The workers' new guilds were abolished, the dominance of the lesser guilds that had prevailed since 1343 came to an end, and the merchant oligarchy recovered its rule. It was under the government of this oligarchy that Florence had to face the threat from Gian Galeazzo Visconti of Milan. In this conflict the Florentines claimed to be standing for freedom against tyranny, and regarded their deliverance from the great duke through his death in 1402 as being due to their steadfastness in the cause of liberty. Devotion to freedom was an essential part of what might be called the Florentine political ideology. In this ideology the expulsion of the duke of Athens in 1343 played an important part, as the Florentines looked back on the time when their city had lived up to its ideals by expelling a tyrant. Even the official diplomatic documents of Florence contain many references to liberty. During the fourteenth century Florence claimed to be defending freedom not only for herself but also for the rest of Tuscany, and even for Italy as a whole. It is true that Florence alone held out to the end against Gian Galeazzo; other

cities yielded to him, voluntarily or otherwise, or stood aloof.

When Filippo Maria Visconti resumed the aggressive policy of his father, Florence opposed him, still professing the ideals of liberty. In 1425 Venice joined the fight against Milan, so that for a while the two great republics fought side by side, each proclaiming its devotion to freedom. With the death of the last Visconti and the coming of Francesco Sforza the alliance was broken when Florence opposed the Venetian expansion into Milanese territory and aided Sforza.

In the first half of the fifteenth century, under the influence of the resistance to the Visconti, there developed in Florence what has been called civic humanism. The humanistic scholars of Florence, who will be discussed at length in Chapter 5, adopted the ideal of the active civic life in the service of the state, and some of the leaders held important civic posts. They praised Florence for her devotion to liberty, and sought the origin of the city in the days of the Roman republic. This represented a change from the customary attribution of the origins of the city to Caesar, whose reputation now began to change until he was regarded as a destroyer of Roman liberty. Instead, the beginnings of the city were traced to a settlement by Sulla's soldiers in the last years of the Roman republic. All these ideals were still alive in the thought of Machiavelli in the sixteenth century. To what extent the vaunted liberty of Florence squared with the facts is another question. In any case, civic freedom was forfeited in 1434 when Cosimo de' Medici came to power. Until then he had been the leader of a faction among the ruling class. For a while he had been exiled in Venice, but when his enemies at home became unpopular he had been called to power. From 1434 to his death in 1464 he was the effective ruler of Florence. He was born in 1389, and was a member of one of the richest families in the city, a member of the ruling merchant-banker oligarchy. The basis of the family fortune was the Medici bank, which had been built up by Cosimo's father. The Medici family was the only one of the great ruling houses of the city which enjoyed much support among the poor, to whom they had shown themselves sympathetic during the troubles of 1378.

Cosimo knew his Florentines, and if he was to deprive them of their republican freedom or such of it as they actually possessed he knew that he must at least leave them with the appearance of it. He, therefore, took no title that would indicate supreme power, nor did he change the established organs of government. He lived simply, for a member of his class, and remained affable and accessible. He did not have his enemies executed, but destroyed their power to harm him by subjecting them to exile and confiscation. He was a patron of culture. The presence of learned Greeks in Florence at the church council of 1439 stimulated Cosimo to encourage the study of Plato, and this was to have important consequences. He was generous to humanistic scholars, inviting two of the most distinguished ones to hold the important position of chancellor of the city. He was similarly generous to artists and architects. He founded the first public library in Europe in the monastery of San Marco, which he had rebuilt. He also built and improved many other churches and monasteries, including the Medici parish church of San Lorenzo, much of

which was built under his patronage by the greatest architect of the time, Brunelleschi. Among the other great artists patronized by Cosimo were the sculptor Donatello and the painter Fra Angelico.

During the thirty years of Cosimo's ascendancy the city was quiet internally, though there were no doubt many who chafed under one-man rule, no matter how skillfully disguised. In foreign policy, as we have seen, he helped Francesco Sforza take over the government of Milan, which ended threats to Florence from that quarter, and helped to bring about the peace settlement of 1454, which gave Italy some respite from serious conflict and external interference for forty years. At his death, he was buried in the church of San Lorenzo. His body was placed in the nave, and over it is a simple inscription which hails him as Pater Patriae, the Father of the Fatherland.

He had done his work so well that he was succeeded by his son, Piero (1464 69) and Piero's son Lorenzo (1469 92). Piero (the Gouty) was an able man who brought the family bank to the height of its prosperity and successfully checked a conspiracy against his rule by some disaffected Florentine families and several Italian cities, including Venice. He died after only five years of rule.

His son Lorenzo, later called the Magnificent, was only twenty when he was asked to assume his father's place at the head of the city government. This brilliant man was not only a patron of scholars, poets, and artists, but was himself a poet whose verses are important in the history of Italian literature. He was less successful as a businessman, and the Medici bank suffered great reverses in his time.

Not long after he had assumed power, he was threatened with a very serious conspiracy, which takes its name from the Pazzi, one of the great Florentine families that resented Medici domination. The Pazzi were encouraged by the pope, Sixtus IV, whose nepotism had placed relatives of his in territory too close to Florence for comfort. The plan was evolved of killing both Lorenzo and his younger brother Giuliano at Mass in the cathedral on April 26, 1478. The plotters succeeded in murdering Giuliano; Lorenzo was wounded, but not seriously. The city then rose against the conspirators, who were tracked down and killed. Lorenzo's hold on the city was strengthened.

His troubles were not over, however, for the pope excommunicated him and the priors, laid an interdict on the city, and, in conjunction with Naples, declared war on Florence. Most of the Italian cities took one side or the other, and war went on during 1478 and 1479, with results generally unfavorable to Florence. At this point Lorenzo undertook perhaps the most spectacular venture of his career. In December 1479 he went to Naples without prior consultation with the officers of the Florentine government to negotiate directly with the Neapolitan king Ferrante. The move was a bold one and involved some risk, although there had been preliminary negotiations, and Ferrante had his own reasons

for wanting peace, among them the Turkish threat and the fear of French intervention on the side of Florence. Thus by February 1480 Lorenzo was able to obtain a peace settlement. In August the Turks occupied Otranto, causing the Italian cities to lay aside temporarily their conflicts with one another. The death in the following year of the sultan Mohammed II brought peace to Italy.

Thereafter Lorenzo, at the height of his influence, strove to maintain the traditional Medici alliance with Milan and Naples, preserve peace throughout the peninsula, and prevent foreign intervention, while preserving good relations with France. Opinions among scholars are divided as to how much Italy owed its relative calm to Lorenzo; in any case, it was only after his death that Italy was forced to submit to foreign domination.

Within Florence, Lorenzo took advantage of his added prestige to make constitutional changes that further strengthened his hold on the state. A Council of Seventy, set up in 1480 and controlled by him, was given charge of the main functions of government. In 1490 a committee of seventeen, similarly controlled by Lorenzo and including him among its members, was established to nominate the priors.

There was some discontent with Lorenzo's conduct of affairs in the later years of his life. The wool trade in Florence was declining. The growing troubles of the Medici bank may have forced Lorenzo to use public money for private purposes, something his predecessors had been careful to avoid. Whether this was true or not, it was believed. The basic problem, of course, was that Lorenzo, although exercising public functions, was still technically a private citizen and thus not entitled to use public money in the pursuit of his work. Whether he or anyone else could have held off the foreign invasions indefinitely is not known, but it is unlikely. The French monarchs were showing increasing interest in Italy. Ferdinand and Isabella were beginning the creation of a strong Spanish monarchy, and a member of a branch of the house of Aragon, to which Ferdinand belonged, already ruled Naples. Ferdinand himself was king of Sicily. There were continued conflicts among the Italian states, but during Lorenzo's lifetime they were settled without outside interference.

Lorenzo himself died young on April 8, 1492, at the age of forty-three. His successor, as we shall see, proved inadequate to his task.

NAPLES AND SICILY

Southern Italy followed a somewhat different line of development from that of the center and north. Though there were important cities, urban life was less highly developed, feudalism and the nobility had a stronger hold, and the king of Naples was the only king in Italy. During the Renaissance, "the kingdom," when Italy was referred to, meant the kingdom of Naples. One reason for the relative backwardness of the development of this

region was that it had been a battleground for centuries; in Naples or Sicily or both, there had been Byzantine armies, Moslems, Normans, Holy Roman emperors, and popes. The popes took a particular interest in the affairs of this area, and their interference had far-reaching and often harmful effects. The kingdom of Naples was a vassal state of the papacy, a fact which justified and encouraged papal interference. In 1265, to protect his interests, which were threatened by the German imperial family of Hohenstaufen, the pope called into Italy Charles of Anjou, brother of King Louis IX of France (St. Louis). Charles succeeded in freeing the pope from the German menace and was rewarded by being made king of Naples and Sicily.

The government of these territories by French officials was thoroughly hated by the native population. This situation encouraged still another foreign power, in this case the house of Aragon, to intervene. The climax was a terrible rising in 1282, known as the Sicilian Vespers, which delivered Sicily to Aragonese rule, while the mainland, or Naples, remained in the hands of the house of Anjou, the Angevins. Since each attempted to conquer the other and reunite the territory, there followed an incredibly complicated story of conflict and intrigue, made even more confusing by the active interference of the pope. The mainland and Sicily were finally brought back under unified rule when Alfonso of Aragon, known as Alfonso the Magnanimous, conquered Naples in 1442. Alfonso was a lover of the classics and a patron of scholars and men of letters, of whom the most famous was Lorenzo Valla. It was in Alfonso's service, when the latter was fighting the pope, that Valla wrote his treatise on the Donation of Constantine, which will be discussed in Chapter 5. Alfonso attempted to use his Italian position to further the interests of the merchants of Catalonia, a part of the kingdom of Aragon that was becoming one of the great Mediterranean commercial powers. To this end he attempted, by force and bribery, to acquire bases on the Italian coast from which to harass the great Italian commercial cities. His success in this area was limited, and had little effect on Italian merchants and their trade. Alfonso also tried, with some degree of success, to assert his independence of the pope; he would have liked to end his vassal status, but did not manage to do so. The pope, to placate the king, appointed one of Alfonso's subjects also named Alfonso to the College of Cardinals. This Spanish bishop, a member of the Borgia family, later became Pope Calixtus III and in turn raised to the cardinalate his nephew, who became Pope Alexander VI.

Strangely enough, after fighting to unite Naples and Sicily, Alfonso divided them again at his death in 1458. He left Sicily and Sardinia (an earlier Aragonese conquest), together with his Spanish possessions, to his brother John; Naples he left to his illegitimate son Ferdinand, or Ferrante. Ferrante's harshness and tyranny precipitated revolts of the Neapolitan nobility, which were suppressed with characteristic cruelty. It was Ferrante's granddaughter Isabella, daughter of his son and successor, Alfonso, whose marriage to the young duke of Milan helped to precipitate the chain of events that brought the French into Italy in 1494.

ROME AND THE PAPAL STATES

The popes of the Renaissance had a dual position. On the one hand, they were, as rulers of the church, entrusted with the spiritual welfare of Christendom; on the other, they were the heads of an Italian city-state. Their failure to reconcile these two positions or rather, their devotion to the second at the expense of the first secularized the papacy and brought the loss of much of its moral and spiritual authority.

With the awakening of the spirit of civic independence in medieval Italy, the people of Rome became subject to periodic fits of restlessness under papal rule. From time to time movements occurred in the city that repudiated the pope's authority and occasionally drove him out of the city. With the papacy at Avignon in the fourteenth century, the way was prepared for the career of Cola di Rienzo. During this period Rome was in decay and torn by rival factions. Cities in the Papal States were becoming independent, and the foreigners sent from France to rule in the pope's name were bitterly disliked.

Cola di Rienzo was a young Roman of humble origins who read the ancient Roman classics and, because of his reading, had become intoxicated with ideals of Roman freedom. He became the head of a conspiracy to take over the city for the "people" and dispossess the great noble families that had been in control. He even secured papal approval, and in 1347 his plot succeeded. He became head of the city government, assuming the title of "tribune." Petrarch for a while regarded him with hope, for Petrarch too dreamed of restoring the greatness of Rome. Cola began to plan for some sort of Italian federation with Rome as the recognized head; he even seems to have entertained some idea of having Rome recognized as head of the entire world. Unfortunately, power went to his head, and his arrogance, together with the latent hostility of those whom he had deprived of power, brought his overthrow and expulsion from the city in 1348. He then wandered about for a while, eventually presenting himself at the court of Emperor Charles IV at Prague, possibly to urge the emperor to assert his rights in Italy. Charles imprisoned him for a time, then sent him to the pope at Avignon. One of the popes tried to make use of him by sending him back to Rome in 1354 as his own representative. Again the position of authority was too much for Rienzo to handle, and this time the uprising against him resulted in his murder. The episode of his career, brief as it was, illustrates the power of the classics to affect even political life and the restlessness of the Romans under papal rule or misrule.

Despite efforts by the popes to restore their authority in Rome, this goal eluded them even after the end of the Great Schism in 1417 with the election of Martin V at the Council of Constance. Because of the involvement of the popes in Italian political struggles, enemies of the papacy managed to keep Martin from entering Rome until 1420. Because of the ruined condition of Rome and its scanty resources, Martin was compelled to devote himself to rebuilding the city, restoring order, and developing the temporal power of the

papacy. Thus it was that the popes of the period embarked on their policy of looking first of all after the interests of their state in Italy rather than of the church as a whole.

Martin's successor, Eugenius IV, was driven from Rome in 1434 by a republican revolt, spent many years in exile, and had to reconquer the city by force. From this time on for almost a century, the popes tended to be secular, but secular in different ways. Nicholas V (1447-55) was the first humanist pope and the real founder of the Vatican Library. He brought distinguished scholars and artists to Rome, which he wanted to make into the cultural center of the day. He also had great plans for rebuilding the city architecturally, and began the process which resulted, among other things, in the new St. Peter's and the new Vatican. After the three-year pontificate of Calixtus III, another scholar ascended the papal throne, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who became Pius II (1458-64).

Aeneas Sylvius is one of the more fascinating characters of the Renaissance. As a young man, he had made his way by means of a wide knowledge of the classics, a graceful Latin style, personal charm, and an eye for the main chance. At the Council of Basel he had written in favor of the council instead of the pope, but when he saw the tide turning against the conciliar movement he deftly changed sides. As pope he issued a bull condemning conciliarism in the strongest terms. He had served at the court of the Holy Roman Empire, helping to spread humanism to Germany. He wrote an extensive history of his times. As a young man he was gay and fun-loving. But when he was elected to the papacy, he repudiated his former concerns, disappointed the scholars who had expected patronage from him, and threw himself into a single-hearted attempt to induce the Christian rulers of Europe to mount a new crusade against the infidel who had recovered the Holy Places. The time had passed for such expeditions, and Pius wore himself out in the futile attempt to revive something that was so definitely of the past.

Sixtus IV (1471-84), a member of the family of Della Rovere, illustrates some of the most prominent characteristics of the Renaissance papacy. He practiced nepotism on a scale heretofore unknown among popes, and worked to make the Papal States a strong temporal power. He, therefore, became involved in the diplomatic intrigues and conflicts among the Italian cities. His part in the Pazzi conspiracy has already been shown. In 1481 he took part in the war over Ferrara, which Venice was trying to annex. Peace was made without the pope's participation in 1484, and Sixtus died shortly after. A Latin couplet said that this terrible man, whom no force could subdue, died on merely hearing the name of peace. Sixtus did perform great services for art. The Sistine Chapel was built for him and named after him, and to decorate it he brought to Rome the greatest painters in Italy.

In 1492 the Spanish cardinal Rodrigo Borgia became pope by means of a simoniac election: That is, he managed to purchase the votes of a sufficient number of cardinals. He took the name of Alexander VI. He had many children, to whom he was deeply devoted. Two of them are of historical importance, a daughter, Lucrezia, and a son, Caesar or Cesare. Lucrezia was a woman without strong character who was used as a tool by her

father and brother in the pursuit of their political plans; they even had one of her husbands murdered when he became an obstacle to their purposes. She finished her life as duchess of Ferrara, acquiring a reputation for piety and good works.

Alexander VI has become synonymous with the moral degradation of the Renaissance papacy, and with some justification. He made no attempt to conceal his flagrant sexual immorality; at the time he became pope, his mistress was a girl of eighteen. The Vatican was filled with gay parties in which the pope took a prominent part. It could be argued that the Renaissance popes constituted a graver danger to the church than would be posed by the Protestant reformers. The Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt expressed the opinion that the Reformation saved the papacy, presumably by awakening it to the need for reform before it was too late.

Alexander found the Papal States in great disorder; the conflicts of the noble factions, led by the families of Colonna and Orsini, had reduced Rome to anarchy under the previous pope, Innocent VIII. Alexander restored order, waging a regular war against the Orsini.

Throughout his pontificate, Alexander worked to help his son Cesare build up a state of his own in central Italy. To do this, the pope secured the help of the king of France and placed the resources of the papacy at Cesare's disposal. With a ruthlessness that has been made famous by Machiavelli in *The Prince*, Cesare set out to carve out a dominion for himself while his father was still on the papal throne. He conquered the Romagna, which had long been misruled by petty tyrants, and instituted a firm and effective administration. He proceeded to extend his power into Tuscany, and by 1501 was a threat to Florence. It was for this reason that Machiavelli was sent on missions to him in 1501 and 1502, and had opportunities to talk with him and to witness his methods of operation. Until the death of his father, Cesare was making progress toward the realization of his designs. The full extent of his ambitions is not known; possibly he wished to dominate all Italy. He had attempted to win over the cardinals, so that he could assure the election of a successor to his father who would be favorable to him. However, at the time of the pope's death in August 1503, Cesare himself was critically ill and for a while was not expected to survive. Thus he was in no position to influence the papal election.

Alexander's immediate successor, a nephew of Pius II who took the name of Pius III, was already ill and did not survive his election a month. The next pope, also elected in 1503, was the forceful Giuliano della Rovere, also a papal nephew. Sixtus IV was his uncle and an enemy of the Borgias. Julius II, to use his papal name, was determined to break the power of Cesare Borgia and to incorporate Cesare's conquests in the Papal States. At this critical point in his career, Cesare failed to show his accustomed vigor and resolution. The pope stripped him of his possessions and imprisoned him. The rest of Cesare's life is an anticlimax; he died obscurely in 1507, fighting in Navarre. Julius was a great patron of the arts, employing both Michelangelo and Raphael and making Rome the cultural capital of Italy. In his political activities, he was particularly interested in strengthening the temporal

power of the papacy. He restored the papal supremacy in the Romagna and became the center of Italian diplomacy, organizing the campaigns against Venice and France that will be discussed later. He is preeminently the "warrior" pope. He died in 1513. His successor, Leo X (1513-21) was Giovanni de' Medici, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, not yet thirty at the time of his elevation to the papal throne.

He was only a deacon and had to be ordained a priest before he could be consecrated. He was a patron of arts and letters, and such a lavish spender of the revenues of the church that at the time of his death the papacy was deeply in debt. Much of the expense went for luxury and entertainment; the pope set a splendid table, and with banquets, balls, carnivals, and theatrical entertainments made Rome a city of pleasure. His generous patronage kept Rome the artistic center of Italy. Distinguished scholars served as papal secretaries. Leo's chief aim was the aggrandizement of his family, the Medici. As head of the family, he was the real ruler of Florence. He made his cousin Giulio a cardinal and put him in charge of the Florentine government. He also had the grandiose scheme of becoming the arbiter of European politics, and engaged in continual intrigues, making alliances, betraying allies, and becoming distrusted by all. He did not concern himself with religious or spiritual matters, and was unable to understand the importance of the troubles that were reported to him from Germany because of an obscure German friar named Martin Luther.

When Leo died, still young, in 1521, the conclave was deadlocked for a long time. His successor, who was not chosen until the following year, was a Dutchman named Adrian of Utrecht, who was not even present. He owed his election to the fact that he was a compromise candidate and had the support of the emperor Charles V, of whom he was a counselor and former tutor. He took the name of Adrian VI, thus keeping his lay name, which was unusual. He was also unusual for that period by being devoted to religion and earnestly desiring reform. He did not patronize artists and scholars nor did he give elaborate entertainments. Naturally, this made him very unpopular in Rome and subjected him to a great deal of mockery. He failed to obtain the needed reforms, and his early death in 1523 was not lamented.

From 1523 to 1534, the pope was Giulio de' Medici, Clement VII, illegitimate son of Giuliano, the murdered brother of Lorenzo the Magnificent. It was during this time that the papacy, having involved itself deeply in the diplomacy of Europe at the expense of its spiritual functions, now reaped the whirlwind. In the struggle over Italy between France and Spain, the pope committed the tactical error of being on the side of France just as Charles V, emperor and king of Spain, was becoming master of Italy. The result was the Sack of Rome in 1527 by the unpaid and mutinous soldiers of Charles, which caused untold destruction and death, as well as the desecration of sacred places by the German Lutheran mercenaries in Charles's service. Many contemporaries were convinced that the sack, which had a profound psychological effect, was God's punishment visited on the popes for their wickedness. It was a significant step in the process by which Spanish

domination was fastened on Italy, and it had at least one salutary effect: It convinced the pope of the bankruptcy of his diplomatic policy and, in time, turned the popes away from their excessive involvement in European diplomacy. Clement's successor, Paul III, although not a model of sanctity and guilty of nepotism, may be considered the first pope of a new era, that of the Counter Reformation. Thus our brief survey of the Renaissance papacy can conveniently conclude at this point.

OTHER STATES OF ITALY

Our necessary concentration on the five major Italian city-states should not cause us to overlook the other important centers which, although less powerful and influential politically and culturally, made their own indispensable contributions. Though the expansionist policies of the cities so far discussed reduced many important places to dependency, there were some smaller states that maintained their independence. A few may be mentioned here.

The Tuscan city of Siena, not far from Florence, though in frequent conflict with her more powerful neighbor, maintained her independence and her republican government. Sienese painting was important, especially in the early Renaissance. The court of Ferrara, presided over by the ruling Este family, patronized two outstanding poets, Boiardo and Ariosto. Ferrara also became the scene of the educational labors of the great scholar and educator Guarino da Verona, who helped to give the new University of Ferrara great prestige. At Mantua, ruled by the Gonzaga, another great educator, Vittorino da Feltre, carried on his activities. Isabella d'Este, wife to the marquis of Mantua, was an active and important patron of art. Urbino, ruled by the Montefeltro family, was the birthplace of Raphael and the scene of the conversations that form the basis of Castiglione's *Courtier*. Federigo, the most outstanding member of the ruling family (1444-82), is familiar to us from many Renaissance portraits, including that by Piero della Francesca. (Illustration page 58) His powerful features are those of a successful ruler, a famous condottiere, and a lover of art and learning, and the possessor of one of the finest libraries of the time. These examples, to which many more could be added, help to give some idea of the extraordinary richness and variety of Renaissance culture and the range of its achievements.

Federigo da Montefeltro by Piero della Francesca



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CHAPTER 4

THE INVASIONS OF ITALY 1494-1527

MACHIAVELLI AND GUICCIARDINI

In 1494, Charles VIII of France led an army into Italy. Though not the first instance of foreign interference, in retrospect it was an epoch-making event as none of the previous ones had been. It marked the beginning of the period of more or less continuous outside influence, and eventually, domination. The states chiefly involved, France and Spain, had by this time reached a stage in growth of their power and unity that enabled them to pursue their objectives over a long period of time. Italy was, because of its divisions and consequent weakness, the earliest battleground and victim of the emerging modern national states. The struggle between France and Spain, carried on in many places, was the first great problem of international relations in the modern sense, and the fight for control of Italy was only one part of it. The outcome was to be the loss of Italian independence until the second half of the nineteenth century. When Charles mounted his invasion, he was asserting the Angevin claim to the kingdom of Naples. As we have seen, he was encouraged by Ludovico the Moor of Milan. The invasion had profound effects. In Florence, it brought about the expulsion of the Medici and the reestablishment of the republic under the dominating influence of a Dominican friar, Savonarola. Arriving in Naples, Charles easily took over the government, as the king fled.

The French soon learned, however, how slippery was the ground they stood on. Charles's successes caused such alarm, both in Italy and elsewhere, that a league was formed against him. The pope, Venice, some foreign powers, and even Milan, which had called him in, took part. Faced by these forces, and far from his home base, Charles left a garrison in Naples and headed for the Alps and safety. He had to fight his way out of Italy, and had a close call at the battle of Fornovo (July 6, 1495). One reason for the failure of the allies to stop the French, perhaps, is that they were unable to enlist the help of Florence. The Florentines had made an alliance with France, to which they remained faithful. However, the French garrison in Naples was forced to surrender, and so the first French expedition into Italy proved a complete failure.

Ludovico the Moor seemed to be at the summit of his power and prestige. In 1494 he had been given the title of duke of Milan by the Holy Roman emperor Maximilian I. Shortly afterwards his nephew, the young duke whom he had supplanted, died, to the usual

accompaniment of rumors of poison. Ludovico, having called in and then helped to expel the French, may have thought that his skill and cunning had enabled him to use the barbarians for his own purposes. He was soon to be undeceived; what he had really done was to help unloose forces that he could not control. Charles VIII died childless in 1498, to be succeeded by the duke of Orlans, who became Louis XII. One of his ancestors had married a daughter of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, and Louis determined to make good his claim to Milan as well as to Naples. In 1499, therefore, he invaded Italy, taking Milan and forcing Ludovico to flee. Though Ludovico Sforza later regained power, it was for only a brief period; he was taken captive and sent to France, where he spent the rest of his life in prison, dying in 1508. Before executing his designs on Naples, Louis had to come to terms with Ferdinand, king of Aragon, since the king of Naples was a member of the house of Aragon, and Ferdinand could not be expected to allow the French to take over the kingdom unchallenged. He was willing, however, to make a treaty in 1500 (Treaty of Granada) whereby France and Spain would divide Naples between them. There followed a successful joint invasion and occupation, which led to warfare between France and Spain. The Spanish troops were victorious, and by 1503 the French had been deprived of their hold on Naples, though the king did not abandon his claims. Now two opposing powers were established on the Italian mainland: France in Milan, Spain in Naples (as well as Sicily and Sardinia). By 1515 the French had even lost Milan, having been driven once more from Italy, this time by a league formed at the initiative of Pope Julius II. A member of the Sforza family became duke of Milan. The stubborn insistence of the French on pushing their Italian ambitions, even in the face of repeated disappointments, is shown in Louis's successor, Francis I (1515-47), who, in the first year of his reign, invaded Italy again. At the battle of Marignano (September 13-14, 1515), the French won a great victory and took Milan once more. The struggle for Italy went on. In 1516, with the death of Ferdinand, the latter's grandson became Charles I of Spain, and in 1519 he became Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. The conflict between Francis and Charles was to continue until Francis died, and to be carried on by their successors.

The trend of events was always against France, despite occasional successes. In 1525, at the battle of Pavia, not only were the French defeated, but also the king was captured and taken to Spain as a prisoner. In 1526, however, after signing a treaty in which he was forced to abandon his Italian claims and make other concessions (Treaty of Madrid), Francis was released and soon showed that he did not feel bound by his treaty obligations. In 1526, the League of Cognac was formed against Spain, in which the leading members were the king of France, eager to recoup his Italian position, and Pope Clement VII, alarmed at the growing Spanish predominance in Italy. Charles, as king of Spain, already ruled Naples and Sicily; after Pavia, he was also master of Milan. It was as a consequence that the Sack of Rome took place in 1527.

For a while the pope was a virtual prisoner of Charles in the Roman fortress of the Castel Sant'Angelo. In trying to loosen the Spanish grip on Italy, the pope had succeeded only in tightening it, bringing nearer the day when all of Italy, except Venice, would be either

under direct Spanish rule or subservient to preponderant Spanish influence. Peace between Francis and Charles it was to prove only a truce came in 1529, at the Treaty of Cambrai, known as the Ladies' Peace, because the chief negotiators were the mother and sister of Francis and the mother of Charles. Francis's sister, Marguerite of Navarre was important in the religious and cultural history of France, and will concern us in future chapters. In the treaty, Francis again renounced his claims in Italy, but events were to show he had no intention of abiding by his renunciation.

FLORENCE 1494-1530

On the approach of the French in 1494, Piero de' Medici, son and successor of Lorenzo, had suffered a loss of nerve and had left the city to negotiate with Charles VIII. He extracted a promise from the French king to respect the freedom of the city, but only in return for handing over some of the most important fortresses protecting Florentine territory. When the news of this arrangement reached the city, it aroused a great wave of anger and resentment. Piero, forgetting the lessons of his ancestors, had already made himself unpopular by his arrogance and his flaunting of his position.

The consequence was an uprising that drove out Piero and his rule and restored a more popular government. The new government admitted the French to the city, and some tense negotiations took place, in which the Florentines feared that Charles would try to restore Piero and become their master. The determination of the citizens to resist these demands, by arms if need be, so impressed Charles that he did not press them, but departed leaving the city its freedom. He held on to the fortresses, including Pisa, which had thrown off Florentine rule at the approach of the French. To regain Pisa was a passion with Florence, and the hope of doing so with French help was one reason why Florence made an alliance with France and stuck to it faithfully during the next few years.

Among the men who had negotiated with Charles was the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola, who was to be the dominant figure in Florentine politics for the next four years. (Illustration page 62) Born in 1452 in Ferrara, he was a member of a distinguished family. His grandfather, who was largely responsible for his education and early training, was a famous doctor who had become court physician for the ruling Este family. Girolamo manifested from an early age a strongly religious nature, and in 1475, without notifying his parents of his plan, he left home and entered the Dominican order. It took a few years for him to find his true vocation, which was preaching. He became a preacher of repentance, one of a line of such men who appeared periodically in the Middle Ages, calling on the people to turn from their worldly ways before it was too late. In time he developed a preaching style of great power and effectiveness, with a depth of earnestness and conviction that moved his hearers deeply. He first preached in Florence at various times in the 1480s, without much success in appealing to the general public. In 1490 Lorenzo called him to preach there again, and this was the start of his career as an

important figure in Florentine public life. As prior of the Dominican house of San Marco, he at first gave sermons to the brothers, but his reputation became so great that he had to preach in the cathedral, to accommodate all those who wished to hear him.

Girolamo Savonarola

Savonarola's preaching was of the prophetic kind. He fiercely attacked church corruption and predicted God would send an avenger to purify it, and the avenger would come soon. The appearance of Charles VIII seemed to confirm his predictions; and Savonarola, therefore, enjoyed the immense prestige of a successful prophet. He also made no secret of his republican views in politics, being a good deal less courteous to Lorenzo than was customary. On the other hand, he visited Lorenzo on the latter's death bed, apparently amicably, although legends grew up around this meeting. It was said that Savonarola had demanded of the dying man that he restore liberty to Florence; this may have represented the friar's wishes, but the story seems not to be based on fact.

With the overthrow of the Medici, Savonarola became the leading political figure, as he was already the leading religious figure in Florence, though he did not hold public office. At his urging, a Great Council was adopted as the chief organ of government, in imitation of the Venetian example. The Venetian government was widely admired for its stability, but the stability could not be imported with the council, and fierce factional strife continued in Florence. One of the chief issues was Savonarola himself. Among his enemies were those who wished for a return of the Medici: the Franciscans, who were traditional opponents of the Dominicans, and those who opposed the strict regulation of morals and behavior that he imposed on the city. Striving to make Florence a city of Christ, he worked to suppress immoral and extravagant behavior. Bonfires of "vanities" were held for such things as ladies' cosmetics, immoral books, and works of art that might be regarded as harmful.

As the friar influenced Florence, so the city had its effect on him. Professor Donald Weinstein has shown how elements in the Florentine tradition were reflected in his preaching.³ The Florentines had long thought of their city as having a special mission as a center of reform and renewal, and Savonarola emphasized this theme. In addition, he appealed to somewhat more earthly motives by promising that Florence would experience a resurgence of power, prestige, and wealth. The friar's enemies were not confined to Florence. His condemnation of immorality in the church seemed to refer to Alexander VI, who was certainly a likely target, and the hostility of the pope was joined to that of his enemies at home. However, it is likely that the reason for the pope's opposition was chiefly political; he was working to create an anti-French coalition, which he wanted Florence to join. The Florentine government, led by Savonarola, however, clung stubbornly to the French alliance. It may have been a grave political mistake, because when they needed help from the French, they did not get it. The combination of enemies proved too strong for the friar and his adherents; he was excommunicated, forbidden to

preach, and, in 1498, put to death after which his body was burned at the stake. The Florentine republic continued its existence, but it was weak from internal dissension and exposed to grave dangers from outside.

The Medici, with support from Spain, were preparing to recover the city. The Florentines had nowhere to turn but to France. From France, however, they received nothing but promises. With their situation becoming desperate, they turned to various expedients to strengthen themselves. One was to create in 1502 the office of Gonfaloniere a vita, which was given to Piero Soderini. Another innovation was the establishment of a body of citizen troops, or militia, an idea espoused by Niccol Machiavelli, a friend of Soderini, who detested mercenary troops. Machiavelli was put in charge of this body, which was established in 1506, working with indefatigable energy to recruit and train this new army. It scored one dazzling success in retaking Pisa in 1509, but it was no match for the seasoned troops of Spain. The decisive encounter came in 1512, at Prato, when the Spanish easily routed the militia, and Medici control over the city was reestablished.

The head of the family at this time was Cardinal Giovanni, the son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who in the following year became Pope Leo X. He remained the real ruler of the city and vitally interested in its affairs, but he needed someone on the spot. His first choice was his young nephew Lorenzo, son of the Piero who had been driven out in 1494 and had died in 1503. Lorenzo, however, died in 1519. The pope then sent his cousin Giulio, whom he had made a cardinal, to oversee the affairs of the city.

The new rulers, careful and circumspect, were able to retain their power successfully, though there was always an undercurrent of discontent. In 1513 a conspiracy against Medici rule was discovered and thwarted. Machiavelli was imprisoned and tortured, but released after a while on payment of a fine, since he was apparently innocent; the leaders of the plot were executed. After Giulio became Pope Clement VII in 1523, he continued to rule Florence. In 1527, the news of the Sack of Rome caused the Florentines once more to overthrow Medici rule and set up a republic. Three years later, with Spanish help, the pope again took control of the city. This time Medici rule became permanent and absolute; the pretense of a republic was abandoned, and the Medici, heretofore careful to avoid titles, became grand dukes of Tuscany. The days of Florentine republican freedom were over. During these years, Florence produced two of the keenest political observers and political thinkers of all time, Niccol Machiavelli and Francesco Guicciardini. Their work provides the best commentary on Italian politics of the Renaissance.

NICCOL MACHIAVELLI (1469-1527)

Machiavelli entered the service of Florence shortly after the fall of Savonarola and remained active until the return of the Medici in 1512. Though never in the highest ranks of government, he held responsible diplomatic posts and was sent on missions both to

other Italian cities and outside Italy, to France and to the court of the Holy Roman emperor. His missions to Cesare Borgia have been mentioned already. After the return of the Medici, he was dismissed from his positions, along with others who had served the republic. He was banished from Florence, and lived on a small estate that he owned at San Casciano, not far from the city. In 1513, as we have seen, he was imprisoned, tortured, and released with a fine.

On December 10, 1513, he wrote a now-famous letter to his friend Francesco Vettori. He describes with disgust the petty pursuits and dull companions that fill his days. Then he tells how he solaces himself in his miseries:

On the coming of evening, I return to my house and enter my study; and at the door I take off the day's clothing, covered with mud and dust, and put on garments regal and courtly; and reclothed appropriately, I enter the ancient courts of ancient men, where, received by them with affection, I feed on that food which only is mine and which I was born for, where I am not ashamed to speak with them and to ask them the reason for their actions; and they in their kindness answer me; and for four hours of time I do not feel boredom, I forget every trouble, I do not dread poverty, I am not frightened by death; entirely I give myself over to them.

*And because Dante says it does not produce knowledge when we hear but do not remember, I have noted everything in their conversation which has profited me, and have composed a little work *On Princedoms*, where I go as deeply as I can into considerations on this subject, debating what a princedom is, of what kinds they are, how they are gained, how they are kept, why they are lost. And if ever you can find any of my fantasies pleasing, this one should not displease you; and by a prince, and especially by a new prince, it ought to be welcomed.⁴*

The little book is *The Prince*. As a book of advice to rulers, it was one of a numerous species; many such books had been written in antiquity and in the Middle Ages. Some of the Italian humanists had produced such works, and in them had raised questions and expressed views which are continued in Machiavelli's book. For example, they had asked whether the Prince that is, the ruler is bound by conventional ethics, and they had tended to set up an exalted picture of the Prince as a creative figure, absolved from restraints and determining the form of the state. Yet Machiavelli claims to be doing something different from what his predecessors have done, for, while they were picturing ideal states that have never existed, he plans to deal with reality. His sources, he claims, are his own long experience and his constant study of the past. His aim is to tell monarchs how their states can be "governed and maintained." His chief interest, as he told Vettori, was in "new monarchies," as distinguished from hereditary ones; these new monarchies are those which a prince creates or acquires with his own abilities. The new princes to whom he

devotes most attention are Francesco Sforza and especially Cesare Borgia.

His predecessors, in writing advice to princes, had concerned themselves with inculcating virtuous behavior, as did also many of his contemporaries, such as Erasmus; Machiavelli, however, tells the Prince how to gain and keep power. It is this sort of advice that has given his book its fame. The Prince should above all study the art of war, and should avoid the use of mercenary troops. More sensational is the counsel that a prince must "learn how not to be good." It would be praiseworthy, he admits, for the Prince to possess those qualities that are considered virtuous, but to survive in this world he must have "those vices, without which it would be difficult to save the state." This pessimistic conception of ruling is related to Machiavelli's pessimistic attitude toward human nature, which he expresses numerous times. For example, men forget more easily the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony. The prince should be willing to be called niggardly rather than liberal; he should be willing to be feared rather than loved by his people (but he must take care never to be hated by them); he should know how to be cruel.

One of his most famous remarks is that "in the actions of men, and especially of princes, from which there is no appeal, the end justifies the means." It is, therefore, unnecessary for princes to keep faith any longer than it serves their interests. At the same time, the prince must be able to feign and dissemble, appearing to have all the virtues even when just the opposite is true. Cesare Borgia is discussed at length, and his methods, ruthless and treacherous, were held up as examples for a new prince to follow. Yet Machiavelli had not always written thus about Cesare. He had witnessed the Borgia's fall ten years earlier at the hands of Julius II. Machiavelli had been in Rome at the time and had written of him in a cold and contemptuous manner. Furthermore, Cesare hardly appears at all in Machiavelli's other writings. How are these seeming contradictions to be explained? The interpretation of *The Prince* has always been a difficult problem, and has led to numerous explanations over the years. The book has been called a satire. It has been represented primarily as an attempt to gain favor with the Medici (which was admittedly one of its purposes). It has been called a handbook for tyrants, and has been represented as thoroughly immoral or amoral. The puzzle is made more difficult by the contrasts between this little book and Machiavelli's other writings, which show him to have been a fervent republican. Machiavelli, as a believer in republican government, did not approve of one-man rule, whether a hereditary monarchy or a more or less disguised despotism like that of the Medici. So, in writing for princes, he was writing instructions for a type of government he did not trust or respect. He could say immoral acts were fitting for a prince, not because he approved of immoral acts but because he disapproved of princes. *The Prince*, which is his most famous book and has been widely read and commented on, gives a false view of Machiavelli when taken by itself. Against the background of his other writings, it seems a strange book, at variance with what he had to say elsewhere, but explainable considering his hatred and contempt for just the sort of state he was writing about. Why then did he write such a book? He did, of course, seek employment with the Medici; the book was dedicated to young Lorenzo, who paid no attention to it as far as is

known. The last chapter may give some hint, for in it he appeals to Lorenzo to unite Italy and drive out the barbarians. He also states in his Discourses that one-man rule is necessary from time to time to reform a state and restore it to its first principles. One must also take into account the bitterness of his spirit when he wrote it. He had been deprived of office, imprisoned unjustly, condemned to exile, shut out from the city which, as he once wrote in a letter, he loved more than his own soul. It is ironic and sad that he has been so persistently misunderstood by those who have not taken the trouble to find out what he really said.

After writing *The Prince*, Machiavelli composed his *Discourses*, a much larger work and much more important for understanding his thought. The *Discourses* take the form of commentary on the first ten books of the history of Rome by the ancient Roman historian Livy, though Machiavelli is primarily concerned with contemporary affairs. At the outset he claims to be setting out on a new route not yet followed by anyone. What he wants to do is to help his contemporaries understand and emulate the political wisdom of the ancients; in this direction he saw the political salvation of his own time. As *The Prince* is a treatise on monarchy, the *Discourses* is a discussion of republics. It reveals that, for Machiavelli, a republic is the best form of government, and that the ancient Roman republic was the best of all. In the *Discourses* Machiavelli notes that the people have better judgment and are more to be trusted than princes and nobles: "...it is not without good reason that it is said, 'The voice of the people is the voice of God.'" With this admiration for republics he combines a bitter hatred for tyranny. He is particularly opposed to rulers who have taken over and subjected formerly free states. This had happened both in ancient Rome, at the hands of Caesar, and in Florence, at the hands of the Medici. Caesar had ruined Rome; the coming to power of Cosimo de' Medici had been the ruin of Florence. A good prince is one who founds a free state or reforms it when it needs reform, as will periodically be the case. Once he has done so, however, he should leave his authority not to one individual but to many. Not every people is capable of maintaining a republic, as the Romans did; peoples who are corrupt cannot do so. Machiavelli felt that in his day the French, the Spanish, and especially the Italians had become corrupt. For Italy the need is for a strong man who shall reform this corruption and set Italy on the road to freedom. Yet he is not optimistic about the prospects for Italy, because when cities have long been corrupted by tyranny, they become incapable of regaining their freedom. He cites, as an example, the futile effort of the Milanese to restore their republic after the death of Filippo Maria Visconti, only to fall under another tyrant, Francesco Sforza.

Human nature, he repeats, is bad, but it is also plastic and may be molded. The faults of peoples arise from the faults of their rulers; but good men, good laws, and good education can make people better and establish a sound state. Religion is an important factor in government. It reduces people to obedience, as the Romans found, and makes military discipline possible. The Roman religion encouraged civic virtues and helped strengthen the state. The Christian religion, by encouraging humility and patience under provocation,

has been a source of weakness. Machiavelli saw the corruption and ambition of the Church of Rome as a source of the decline of Christianity and the division and weakness of Italy.

In both *The Prince* and the *Discourses*, Machiavelli discusses Fortune. According to Machiavelli, Fortune is a woman and favors the bold. She is mistress of half our actions. Men may further her designs but cannot defeat them. The concept, as he uses it, is rather puzzling; it may refer to those circumstances that are given and cannot be changed and within which the statesman has to act. He also emphasizes that success goes to those whose character and actions conform to the time in which they live; the boldness and impetuosity of Pope Julius II were fitted to his times and problems, whereas under other conditions they might have failed.

Though Machiavelli frequently advocates methods of government similar to those found in *The Prince*, there are passages in which he exalts the power of the virtues. A benevolent and human act, he says, is always more influential than violence or ferocity. Most striking, because of its contrast with the doctrine of *The Prince*, is his condemnation of that perfidy that breaks faith and violates treaties. Only in war is deceit laudable. But when the safety of one's country is at stake, no considerations of justice, humanity, or glory should prevail.

In 1521 Machiavelli published *The Art of War*, which was an attempt to bring about a reform of Italian military methods by copying the organization and discipline of the Roman armies. In this book he shows an unbounded contempt for the Italian princes who neglected their duties, partly by hiring mercenaries, and for the mercenaries whom they employed. Francesco Sforza illustrates the evils of both mercenaries and princes; he betrays the people of Milan who had employed him, deprives them of their liberties, and makes himself their sovereign. In spite of his general pessimism and disillusionment, Machiavelli expresses some hope that Italy, which has raised from the dead poetry, painting, and sculpture, may revive true military discipline and gain freedom. Eventually, Machiavelli began to achieve some success in his attempts to gain favor with the Medici. Cardinal Giulio asked him, among other Florentines, to write his opinions on the best way to reform the Florentine government and to send them to Pope Leo X. In reply Machiavelli proposed the restoration in Florence of a republican form of government, based on that of Savonarola's time, after the death of Pope Leo and the cardinal.

In 1520 he was commissioned by the University of Florence, apparently at Giulio's wish, to write a history of Florence. By the time *The Florentine History* was finished, the cardinal had become Pope Clement VII. Machiavelli dedicated the work to him and presented it to him in Rome in 1525. It was published in 1532, after the author's death. It consisted of eight books, ending with the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent in 1492. Some fragments exist which were to be incorporated into succeeding books but those books were never written. Machiavelli was influenced both by the classical historians and by the humanists who had written histories of Florence. His interests are political and military.

He puts into the mouths of his characters speeches that often seem to be expressions of his own views; they often condemn tyranny and extol freedom. His familiar opinions of the harmful effects of mercenary troops can be found, together with his criticism of the papacy for keeping Italy divided. He also emphasizes the evils of factional strife in Florence, without which there is no level of greatness the city might not have reached. He even manages, in this book written under Medici patronage, to convey his antagonism toward the Medici for having destroyed Florentine freedom, though he also acknowledges that the Florentines were unable to live as free men and threw away their liberty. He is not always accurate, but is capable of exaggerating, distorting, or even inventing material to prove his point, for example, the uselessness of mercenary soldiers. Nevertheless, the *Florentine History* is one of the great historical works, because of the vigor of its style, the swiftness of its narrative, and the penetration of its observations of political life. It is also outstanding because of Machiavelli's desire to penetrate beneath the surface of events and uncover underlying causes and connections. His other writings include the letters and reports he wrote on his diplomatic missions. These give valuable information about the political life of the time, as well as his own experiences and the development of his thought. He also wrote plays and stories, which are important in the history of Italian literature. Because of his style, his political writings alone would make him important as a literary figure. He is one of the great masters of Italian prose. He also wrote a little poetry, including some sonnets and some political poems.

After the battle of Pavia in 1525, Machiavelli, like many other Italians, was aware of the danger that Charles V would dominate Italy. Still trusting in an armed citizenry, Machiavelli was able to interest the pope in the idea of a national militia for Italy, but nothing came of the plan. Later he was given an important position in preparing the defense of Florence. In 1527, when the news of the Sack of Rome brought the restoration of the republic in Florence, Machiavelli sought a position in the new government. Because of his identification in the minds of the Florentines with the Medici, "the great republican" was refused employment. This blow perhaps hastened his death, which came on June 22.

FRANCESCO GUICCIARDINI (1483-1540)

Although Guicciardini is now recognized as one of the most important historians and political thinkers of the Italian Renaissance, this recognition has been slow in coming. None of his works was published during his lifetime, most of them did not appear in print until the nineteenth century, and several have been discovered and published only in the twentieth. He was a member of one of the most distinguished families in Florence, one which had long been accustomed to holding the highest offices in the state and wielding great influence. Guicciardini himself, eager from an early age for power and prestige, was trained as a lawyer and even as a young man was given positions of great honor and responsibility. The return of the Medici to Florence in 1512, and the elevation of one of them to the papacy in the following year, gave him and many other Florentines a chance

to enter papal service. For many years he held responsible posts, as governor of territories in the Papal States and, under the second Medici pope, Clement VII, as a close adviser. In his governorships he proved firm, sometimes harsh, devoted, incorruptible, and very courageous. His performance of his duties was sometimes brilliant, but his harshness tended to antagonize the inhabitants of the territories entrusted to him. During the republican interval of 1527-30 in Florence, Guicciardini, as an adherent of the Medici, was subjected to humiliating treatment and confiscation of property. With the restoration of Medici rule in 1530, the tide turned; as an official of the pope, Guicciardini was granted great authority in Florence and found himself in a position to get revenge on the republican leaders who had made him suffer. He took full advantage of the situation, showing himself merciless and vindictive. In his last years, he was set aside and deprived of all authority by Cosimo I, the young Medici duke of Florence, whom he had helped raise to power. It was during this period of enforced idleness that he wrote his masterpiece, the *History of Italy*, covering the period from 1494 to 1534.

He had already, in his twenties, written a *Storie fiorentine*, which deals with the years from 1378 to 1509. He worked on this book apparently in 1508 and 1509 and left it incomplete. Much later he started another Florentine history, which was discovered and edited by Roberto Ridolfi, who called it *Cose fiorentine* and published it in 1945. Among his numerous other writings are his reminiscences of his early life, his political maxims and reflections, and a number of other works, all dealing with political questions. Like Machiavelli, who was his good friend, he was interested passionately and exclusively in politics. Like Machiavelli also, he loved Florence and its republican traditions. In spite of his many years of service to the Medici, he was not a believer in one-man rule or despotism. His governmental ideal was a mixed form, with monarchical, popular, and aristocratic elements, but with the aristocratic predominating. He always felt that the best and most capable people should be entrusted with the major responsibilities of government, and this meant for him the members of the class to which he himself belonged. It was his conviction that men should govern their affairs by reason, but he was aware that the power of reason to determine the outcome of human events is limited by fortune. These two forces, fortune and reason, explain all historical events for him. The calamities that had overtaken Italy since 1494 a year he, like Machiavelli, recognized as a turning point had convinced many Italians that force is the determining factor in human affairs and had induced a hopelessness arising from the feeling of being in the grip of vast, uncontrollable forces. Guicciardini was also impressed with the influence of folly, shortsightedness, and self-defeating greed.

Therefore, his comments on politics are thoroughly disillusioned. In 1530 he wrote his unfinished *Considerations on the Discourses of Machiavelli*, in which he took Machiavelli to task for exaggeration and overstatement and for his tendency to derive general laws from specific instances. Guicciardini preferred to examine carefully each case, being more distrustful of large generalizations. This insistence on the specific, particular, and individual is one of the qualities that make him a great historian. In this field he is even

superior to Machiavelli and deserves to be called the first modern historian. His historical writings, particularly the *History of Italy*, opened a new era in historiography. No earlier historian had based his account so thoroughly on documentary sources. He strove always for the highest possible accuracy. But this alone was not enough; he also searched for underlying causes. These he found in human motivations, and he was skilled in examining the motives of his narrative's principal actors.

Between the time of his youthful *Florentine History* and the great *History of Italy*, his outlook had broadened from the local to the universal. In the earlier book he viewed events from a narrowly Florentine point of view, but in the later one he more clearly saw the affairs of Italy as belonging to a wider European context and involving many non-Italian factors. His work is notable also for its objectivity. Writing about events that affected his feelings deeply, and in which his ancestors as well as he himself had been involved, he did his best to eliminate all traces of personal opinion or bias. He adhered strictly to human factors in dealing with cause and effect; the theological preconceptions of earlier historical writers are absent.

Machiavelli and Guicciardini were not the only outstanding historians in Renaissance Italy. Some of the humanist historians will be discussed in the following chapter.



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CHAPTER 5

ITALIAN HUMANISM

In western Europe during the Middle Ages, the legacy of Greece and Rome had not been forgotten. Aristotle was the supreme philosophical authority. Plato's works were less well-known; but his reputation was great, and his ideas and outlook had penetrated to medieval thinkers, partly through his *Timaeus*, partly through the writings of others, especially St. Augustine. Virgil was revered and read. Nevertheless, despite the attention paid to these and other classical authors, it is proper to speak of a classical revival in the Renaissance.

An intense search was carried on for classical writings that had disappeared from circulation. The study of Greek, which had largely lapsed in the West, was resumed, and the body of classical Greek literature was recovered and studied. Classical authors were looked to as models of style, and the ideas of ancient philosophers found adherents. The world of antiquity was regarded as an age of greatness that had been followed by one of decline. It was hoped that by following in the footsteps of the ancients, it might be possible to rise from the decadence of the present to a higher plane. We have seen something of this in the case of Machiavelli. In the areas of literature and education, this endeavor was carried on largely by a class of professional classical scholars who came to be referred to as **humanists**.

Humanism derives from the Latin word *humanitas*, which carries the connotation of the highest human faculties and the type of intellectual culture that develops these faculties.

The humane studies aimed at training men to take their place in society and public life. Cicero, one of the great Roman humanists, states in the *De officiis* (On Moral Duties) that men are set apart by reason and speech, which enable them to live together in society.

Renaissance humanism, following the ancient tradition, was largely oriented toward rhetoric, the art of correct expression. Rhetoric was important in the life of the ancient city-states, where each citizen could attend public assemblies and try to persuade his fellows by his skill in oratory. Rhetoric had a moral purpose, since by effective expression the orator was supposed to persuade to good action. The education of the orator in antiquity was largely literary and linguistic. Renaissance humanists followed in this tradition by concentrating on a special set of subjects: oratory, history, poetry, and moral philosophy. Thus humanism did not cover all fields of knowledge and was not equally interested in all aspects of the works of classical antiquity. Nor did humanistic education comprise all the

educational activity of the age by any means.

The term humanism has not been defined in the same way by all. The preceding discussion is based on the ideas of Paul Oskar Kristeller, one of the most distinguished scholars in the field. Others give the term a broader definition. For the sake of an introductory survey like this, it may be permissible to go a bit beyond the narrow definition and include some writers, not strictly humanists, who were concerned with the problem an absorbing one in the Renaissance of the nature of man and his place in the universe.

It was in Italy, because of the persistence of the classical tradition there, that Renaissance humanism first grew up. As early as the later years of the thirteenth century, in several places, a more accurate understanding of the ancient writers becomes evident. The bearers of this understanding were often lawyers, whose study of the Roman civil law provided them with access to the spirit and institutions of Rome, and led them to the study of Roman history and literature. The city of Padua was one of the important early centers of humanistic study. The great figure who did most to give the decisive impulse to these developing tendencies was Francesco Petrarca, or *Petrarch* (1304-74), who has been called the "father of humanism." Though of Florentine parentage, he was born in Arezzo, where his father, a member of the proscribed White faction, was then living in exile. When Petrarch was about eight years old, the family moved to Avignon, then the seat of the papacy. In his writings, Petrarch expressed hatred for the corruption of the place. It was here that he first saw Laura, the woman he loved and celebrated in his poetry. From an early age he was attracted to the study of the classics, a study his father tried in vain to discourage. At his father's bidding, Petrarch attended the University of Montpellier for four years to study law, and later continued his studies in the same subject at Bologna. He was never attracted to legal study, and abandoned it on the death of his father in 1326. For several years he lived in and near Avignon, much of the time in his country home at Vacluse about fifteen miles from the city. In 1341 he went to Rome to be crowned with the laurel wreath of poetry. This honor, conferred upon poets in antiquity, had been revived or continued in medieval Italy. Petrarch apparently had schemed to get this honor, although he later told the story in such a way as to make it appear that it was unsolicited and came as a surprise. Although he became known for his Italian love poems to Laura, these would not have gained him the laurel. For this he needed something more serious, written in Latin. He had been writing an epic on the Second Punic War, entitled *Africa*, which was not finished and had not been published. Few people, if any, could have seen it, and yet it was chiefly on the strength of this work that he was crowned. He also received Roman citizenship, of which he was very proud. For him, filled as he was with memories of antiquity, Rome still was, or ought to be, the center of the world. "What else is all history," he once wrote, "but the praise of Rome?" From then on, he spent much of his time in Italy, until he moved there permanently in 1353.

Meanwhile, he became acquainted with Cola di Rienzo and followed his remarkable

career with great interest. At first Petrarch was enthusiastic, hoping Cola would be able to restore something of the ancient glory of Rome. His enthusiasm shows both his feeling for Rome and his political naiveté. In time he became disillusioned with Cola, as his career proceeded to its tragic end. In 1352, when Cola had been sent to Avignon by the emperor, he asked to see Petrarch, who refused to meet him. Yet Petrarch always praised Cola for what he saw as his attempt to liberate Rome, and regretted that it had not succeeded. During the last two decades of his life (1353-74), Italy was Petrarch's home. For a while he lived in Milan, where he had been invited by the ruler Archbishop Giovanni Visconti, though some of his friends were unhappy that he would accept a tyrant's patronage. Later he lived in the territories of Padua and Venice. From 1370 he lived in the Euganean hills, in the domains of the rulers of Padua, the Carrara family. His death came on July 19, 1374.

He never accepted any position that might keep him from his real work, study and writing. He could have had an important position in the church, perhaps a bishopric or even the red hat of a cardinal, but he refused to compromise his freedom. It was his voluminous writing that gave him his immense prestige and made him the friend and valued guest, not only of the rulers of Italian city-states but also of the king of France and the Holy Roman emperor, and caused lesser men to feel honored to receive a letter from him. His writings in Italian will be discussed elsewhere; it was his Latin works that were the primary basis for his standing among the great and the learned. (He never succeeded in learning Greek, and was unable to form an adequate concept of Greek history and civilization.) One of the chief purposes of his literary efforts was the revival of the glories and the ideals of ancient

Rome, by conveying to his contemporaries a knowledge of that great age. He had a practical purpose in doing this: He hoped that the examples of ancient greatness would elevate the sadly deficient standards of his own age. His equipment for this task included a knowledge of Roman history and literature remarkable for the period in which he lived.

Perhaps as important, or even more so, was his remarkable capacity for imaginative reconstruction and sympathy for the men and events of ancient Rome. He could feel the presence of the great figures of antiquity, not as symbols or abstractions but as living, individual personalities. According to a great authority, Pierre de Nolhac, Petrarch was the first person in centuries to understand Cicero's character. He wrote an extraordinary series of letters to classical authors, including not only Cicero but Virgil, Homer and others, praising their virtues and achievements and chiding them for their faults and weaknesses. He must be regarded as one of the guides to the modern historical consciousness, which endeavors to see the past as alive and to know and experience it, as far as may be, on its own terms.

Not only the content of the Roman authors but also their form was important to Petrarch. He revolted against the style of the scholastic writers of the Middle Ages and advocated a return to a classical manner of expression. He developed his own distinctive Latin style, which, while it is not like that of any ancient writer, is indisputably his own. Humanism had practical aims. This can be seen in Petrarch's attitude toward philosophy. He had no use for the abstract philosophy of the scholastics, who, in addition to using language that

he considered barbarous, dealt with problems that to him seemed abstract and irrelevant, problems of metaphysics, natural philosophy, and the nature of knowledge, or epistemology. The only branch of philosophy that concerned him was moral philosophy, which did something useful by teaching men how to live. Aristotle, so much admired by many of his contemporaries and in many ways by Petrarch himself, he nevertheless criticizes: Aristotle, he says, defines virtue, but does not impel one to follow it.

He attacked the scholastic concern for logic; logic, says Petrarch, should come early in one's training and not at the end of it.

He was also the first great Renaissance seeker and collector of classical manuscripts. His library may have contained over two hundred volumes, mostly classical works. On his travels he always looked for new books to add to his collection. He was especially eager to find works that had been lost; his great discovery was Cicero's *Letters to Atticus*.

In some ways Petrarch's most interesting creation was himself. All his study and work went into making a self-conscious, unique personality, which can still, after six hundred years, impress itself vividly upon us. It is difficult to think of anyone for centuries before his time and not many since whom we can know as well as we can know him. His intense consciousness of himself is shown in his unfinished *Letter to Posterity*. This was to be the last of his published letters, which remain an important source of information about his life, aims, and character. He was aware of the originality of the *Letter to Posterity*. In it he gives a comprehensive picture of himself, describing his family, his temperament, and his physical appearance, and then giving an account of his experiences. It is clear from this, as from other evidence, that he was a man conscious of his own eminence and easily disturbed by criticism, seeing himself as someone apart from the herd, though at the same time eager for its approval. He was also a man of great personal warmth, with a gift for friendship.

The most intimate glimpses of Petrarch's mind and personality probably come from his Italian poems, which will be discussed later. But one little book, which he called his *Secretum*, is also significant for its self-revelation. It is written in Latin and consists of a series of imaginary dialogues between Petrarch himself and St. Augustine, to whose works he was very much attached. Augustine here plays the part of Petrarch's conscience, and there is some remarkably acute self-analysis on Petrarch's part. He pleads guilty to cupidity, ambition, and lust, and there is a discussion of his *acedia*, a black melancholy that sometimes possesses him for days. His worst sins are his love of Laura and his love of glory, the desire for human praise and an undying name. Augustine exhorts him to turn from such thoughts and think of his soul and of preparation for death. It is doubtful Petrarch ever managed to subdue his desire for fame and glory. That he felt it as a sin shows that his moral standpoint was that of a devout Christian, strongly affected by the ascetic ideals of the Middle Ages. He was always faithful to the church and to religion, no matter how critical he was of the corruption of the Curia at Avignon. As he grew older he

turned more and more to religious literature and meditation. One of his most beautiful poems is his address to the Blessed Virgin (*Vergine bella*), and many of his writings deal with moral subjects. To the accusation that he was a good man but not very learned, he replied that if he had the choice, he would prefer to be good. We have given a rather large amount of space to Petrarch, partly because so much is known about him, but chiefly because he is so important, both in himself and in the precedents which he set. The humanists who come later were in many respects his followers, and his outlook and attitudes have exercised a formative influence on subsequent generations.

HUMANISM AFTER PETRARCH

It was the aim of the humanists to bring to light the fullest possible knowledge of classical antiquity. It soon became clear that two basic prerequisites for this enterprise were the recovery of as many classical writings as possible and the study of Greek.

Many classical writings were irretrievably lost; others, for example Livy's *History of Rome*, had only partially survived. There were others of which a few copies or perhaps only one still existed, but were buried in a monastic library or some other location where they had been neglected and left unread for years. It was the aim of the humanists to search for all such works. Where two or more copies existed, there were invariably differences between them. It must be remembered that all were hand-written, and it was necessary to develop techniques of textual criticism, that is, of systematic study of the relationships between manuscripts in order to establish the most accurate possible text. It was the humanists who brought to light virtually all the classical writings that are known today and who laid the foundations of the science of textual criticism, still vitally important in Biblical study and many other areas as well as in the field of classical scholarship.

Some of the manuscript hunters and discoverers may be mentioned here. **Boccaccio**, faithful friend and disciple of Petrarch in this field, discovered some works of Ovid and Martial, and perhaps acquired the manuscript of Varro on which all other known manuscripts of that author are based. He was also the first humanist to be familiar with Tacitus, and may have acquired a manuscript containing a substantial amount of that author's works.

The Council of Constance, referred to already in another connection, holds an important place in the recovery of ancient manuscripts. The leading figure in the quest at Constance was **Poggio Bracciolini** (1380-1459). At the time when he attended the council, he was in the service of the papacy. From Constance he made several manuscript-hunting expeditions into parts of Switzerland, France and Germany. His discoveries included a number of Cicero's orations, a complete copy of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* (The education of an orator) and the poem of Lucretius, *De rerum natura* (On the nature of

things). Four of Cicero's orations that he found are not known to exist in any other copies; he may, therefore, have preserved them from being lost forever.

By 1433 the main body of the surviving Latin classics had been made available. In the meantime the recovery of classical Greek literature in the original language had begun.

From 1397 to 1400, in Florence, a learned Greek, Manuel Chrysoloras, taught the language to some of the most brilliant and promising scholars in the city. One of them was **Leonardo Bruni**, who used his knowledge of Greek to translate books by several authors, including Demosthenes, Plutarch, Xenophon, and especially Plato and Aristotle. Another distinguished pupil of Chrysoloras was Guarino Guarini, or Guarino da Verona, who later became one of the most distinguished humanist teachers. He lived from 1403 to 1408 in the household of Chrysoloras in Constantinople, mastering Greek and acquiring Greek manuscripts. Something will be said later about his work as an educator.

The spreading knowledge of the Greek language in Italy stimulated a search for Greek manuscripts. Before the coming of Chrysoloras, very few such manuscripts had existed in Italy, but during the fifteenth century this deficiency was made up, until all the principal poets and prose writers, and many minor authors, were represented. Italians went to the East, where such manuscripts were available, and brought them back. Guarino collected more than fifty during his stay in Constantinople. The greatest collector of Greek works was Giovanni Aurispa, who, in 1423, on his return from Constantinople to Italy, possessed a library of 238 manuscripts, most of which were classical Greek works. With the invention of printing in the middle of the fifteenth century, it became possible to turn out in large quantities texts of classical writings. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the great bulk of all known classical literature, both Greek and Roman, came from the press. Although printing was not an Italian invention, most of the first editions of the classics were printed in Italy until about the time of the Sack of Rome. The greatest of the early Italian printers was **Aldo Manuzio** of Venice, whose work will be more fully discussed in Chapter 9.

However, it became clear that, in recovering the knowledge of antiquity, books were not the only source of information; knowledge could also be gained from coins, inscriptions, and the monuments and other physical remains of the ancient world. Thus a beginning was made in the studies of numismatics, epigraphy and archaeology. Cola di Rienzo and Petrarch had glimpsed the historical importance of the ruins of ancient Rome and deplored the way that they had been neglected and pillaged. Poggio Bracciolini collected inscriptions in Rome, and in one of his books described the ancient ruins. Cyriacus of Ancona (c.1391-c.1455) was interested in ancient manuscripts, inscriptions, and works of art; he described his mission as being "to wake the dead." Flavio Biondo (1392-1463), historian and archaeologist, finished a book in 1446 on the topography of imperial Rome, *Roma instaurata* and in 1453 there appeared his *Italia illustrata*, which did the same for all Italy and became the basis for all subsequent work in the field. The humanists came to enjoy a considerable prestige. One sign of this is that they were employed for important

public offices, such as chancellor of Florence. The Florentine chancellor was in charge of the city's correspondence with other states, and the position came to be held by leading humanists. The first of these was **Coluccio Salutati** (1331-1406), who held the post from 1375 until his death. He was also the center of the Florentine humanistic circle and in that capacity exerted considerable influence on some of the leading intellectuals of the time.

He was largely responsible for the invitation to Chrysoloras to come to Florence. Leonardo Bruni and Poggio Bracciolini, both future Florentine chancellors and leaders of the humanistic movement, were in their youth disciples of his, as were many others who attained scholarly distinction. Salutati was a conscious and active promoter and member of the humanistic movement. In a letter he wrote when very young to a friend of Petrarch, Francesco Nelli, he makes the claim that through the efforts of Petrarch and Nelli, the Muses are returning to their songs and the springs of inspiration are gushing once more. This is one of the earliest references to a revival of letters, which helped to establish the idea of a rebirth or Renaissance. When the new learning, or humanism, was attacked, he came to its defense. On several occasions he wrote defenses of poetry against its detractors basing his justification partly on moral grounds by the assertion that the poet's task is to praise virtue and attack vice. He also asserted that poetry should be interpreted allegorically, a doctrine that had been held by Petrarch, in whose opinion poetry was to teach important truths indirectly. The idea was a familiar one; in the *Divine Comedy*, Dante expected the reader to dig beneath the surface for the deeper meanings. At the time of his death, Salutati was working on a defense of poetry; in the part that he finished, he declared poetry to be the greatest of all the arts and sciences, and the summation of them.

Salutati was religious and patriotic, and the two things went hand-in-hand for him. He believed that man best served God in active participation in public life rather than in solitary contemplation. "The fairest things on earth," he wrote, "are the fatherland and one's friends." This devotion to public service, exemplified in his life as well as his writings, was part of the civic humanism referred to earlier, and exemplified also by Bruni and others who loved and served the state while at the same time pursuing their studies. In accordance with his combination of civic activism and religious and moral earnestness, he felt, like Petrarch, that the only valuable branch of philosophy was moral philosophy, and he helped to establish this as the standard humanist position. Salutati was a devout Christian. In spite of his admiration for the classical authors, he condemned their philosophy when it contradicted Christian doctrine. The ancients, according to him, went astray with their erroneous belief that a virtuous life was possible without God. In spite of his devotion to the active life, he also wrote of the joys of monasticism.

LORENZO VALLA AND THE CRITICAL SPIRIT

In the hands of a genius, humanism could become a powerful force. Its critical method and outlook, when applied to the ancient writings, meant a return to the original texts, stripped of errors of transmission and of the traditional interpretations or

misinterpretations that had developed over centuries. This method could be extended beyond classical scholarship and applied to a wide range of institutions and ideas. This is all exemplified in the work of *Lorenzo Valla* (1407-57), possibly the most brilliant Italian humanist.

Valla was born in Rome and spent his last years there as a papal secretary and professor at the university. He also taught at Padua and served Alfonso the Magnanimous of Naples. Though he was a priest, the boldness and independence of his thought brought upon him accusations of heresy. He never denied the doctrines of the church, and in one respect may seem more narrowly orthodox than some of the other humanists; for, while they often sought to reconcile Christian teachings with the ideas of ancient philosophers, Valla rejected this endeavor. He consistently asserted that there could be no reconciliation between pagan and Christian thought, and his works contain condemnations of philosophy.

In 1431 he published a treatise *On Pleasure*, a title he changed to *On the True Good*. In it three speakers, a Stoic, an Epicurean, and a Christian, discuss the nature of the true good.

His Christian speaker regards the Epicurean position as closer to the Christian than the Stoic position, and some of Valla's critics accused him of really favoring the Epicurean view over the Christian. This is probably untrue, and the Christian point of view is no doubt Valla's own. Between 1435 and 1443 he wrote a dialogue *On Free Will*, in which he tackled the old problem of reconciling man's freedom with God's omnipotence. If God is all-powerful and all-knowing, then how does man have any choice between good and evil? And, if man has no capacity to make such moral choices, is it fair to punish him for choosing wrongly? Another way of putting the problem is to say that there seems to be a conflict between God's power and His goodness. If He could have saved man from sin and did not, then His goodness is in question; if He wanted to save man and could not, then it is His power that seems to be called into doubt. One of Valla's solutions to the problem is to make a distinction between God's foreknowledge and his will. The fact that God knows what will happen does not cause it to happen. This distinction is offered as a way of saving man's freedom of will as well as the divine justice. However, the dialogue goes on to declare that God has given to men and animals certain natures, and that they will act according to those natures; this has the effect of restricting the freedom of the will he has previously claimed. Apparently Valla was aware of his failure to solve the problem, because at the end he urges trust in God rather than reliance on reason; what we need is faith, humility, and charity.

For Valla, language was supremely important, and rhetoric was the most important study.

He referred to Latin as a sacrament, as something having a divine character. He was a profound student of the language, and realized that words had been twisted out of their original meanings and that it was essential to strip off the accretions to find out what the classical writers had really said. Thus he saw the importance of philology as a tool for understanding the past. One of his most influential works was his *Elegantiae linguae latinae* (Elegances of the Latin Language), which was first printed in 1444 and by 1550

had appeared in over sixty editions. His purpose was to teach a correct understanding of classical usage, partly to enable his contemporaries to write correctly but chiefly to aid in the understanding of the classical authors.

He applied his critical faculties beyond linguistics in a book on the monastic life (*De professione religiosorum*) written in 1442. Here he concluded that there is only one level of moral perfection for Christians, and that the monastic life cannot improve on this. Many criticisms were leveled at monks for not living up to their rules; Valla goes much further, and takes a more radical stand, in attacking the whole monastic idea, not merely the abuse of it.

Another work of great importance was his *Adnotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Notes on the New Testament). Not published in Valla's lifetime, it was later found and published by Erasmus, and was based on a comparison of the received text of the New Testament, the Latin Vulgate, with the original Greek. Valla used at least three Greek manuscripts for his notes, which were grammatical rather than theological, and he found in the Latin text a number of faulty renderings of the original. He insisted theologians must start with the grammatical sense of a Biblical passage in interpreting its meaning a radical departure from the highly figurative readings of the Bible that were standard in the Middle Ages.

This approach entitles him to be considered one of the founders of modern Biblical scholarship. He had only contempt for scholastics who wrote on the New Testament without knowing Greek.

Valla also cast doubt on, or denied altogether, the authenticity of certain writings that had been long accepted by Christians, for example, the supposed correspondence between St. Paul and Seneca. Probably his most famous work today is his treatise on the *Donation of Constantine*, which he produced in 1440 in the service of Alfonso the Magnanimous of Naples, who was at the time in conflict with the pope. The Donation is a document that purported to come from the hand of the emperor Constantine in the fourth century. Constantine, having been healed of leprosy by Pope Sylvester, grants to the papacy what amounts to dominion over the western half of the Roman Empire. Actually, it was an eighth-century forgery, but it had been accepted into the canon law and served as one of the bases for papal claims to temporal dominion. Valla was not the first to question it; several others, including Dante, had done so. Valla's attack is the most famous, and made impossible any further defense of the Donation. He uses a number of different types of argument to show up the falsity of the document: arguments based on common sense, on historical analysis, and on the actual wording of the Donation. There are no records of the gift in the histories of the time, for example; this is one of his historical arguments. But the most striking line of reasoning, and the one that most effectively shows the practical importance of humanistic method, is his examination of the language in which the Donation is written. Because of his thorough knowledge of classical Latin, he shows through numerous examples and not without sarcasm that nobody writing Latin in Constantine's time would have written that way. It was, therefore, done much later, and in

barbarous Latin. Thus humanism and scholarship become weapons in the search for truth, and an important contribution is made to the methods of modern historical research.

HUMANISM AND HISTORICAL WRITING

The humanists made great contributions to the writing of history in the modern sense. Valla, as we have seen, did much to establish critical methods for the study of the past. He studied it from the sources and without the religious preconceptions that had dominated historical writing for centuries. The most important influences on the writing of history in Christian Europe were probably the *Bible* and Augustine's *City of God*. From these arose the conception of human history as the unfolding of the divine purpose in human affairs. Medieval chroniclers sometimes accepted uncritically into their works miraculous events, as was also true of lives of the saints, a popular form of biographical literature.

This is not to deny that valuable historical writing was done in the Middle Ages, or that there is anything inherently wrong with the interpretation of history from the Christian point of view; many distinguished scholars today present forceful arguments in favor of such an interpretation. However, it remained for the Renaissance to establish modern canons of critical investigation of the past. The Italian humanists were first in this field.

In entering the new world of historical thought, the Renaissance writers were assisted by the example of the ancients, whom they took as their models. Of the great ancient historians, it was probably Livy who meant the most to them. Livy, the patriotic Roman, holding up to his fellow countrymen the virtues of their ancestors in order to inspire them to emulation, to help them cherish their heritage and learn from the past. The humanist historians also were patriotic, writing the history of their cities or of Italy. They believed this history as a source of moral and political lessons for citizens and statesmen. They concentrated, like their classical models, on political and military matters and on the actions of outstanding personalities. In addition, they adopted the classical practice of putting in the mouths of their characters speeches for which the text was not available in any documents, but which were intended to be appropriate to the occasion and the character of the speaker. The biography, in the tradition of Plutarch and Suetonius, was a congenial form in the atmosphere of individualism that characterized the Renaissance.

The historians saw the decline of Rome as the essential precondition to the rise of modern Italy and its city-states. Thus the medieval period acquired a great deal of significance, and provided the first historical justification of the Middle Ages. For such writers, whose interests were political and military, their own age did not mark a sharp break with the Middle Ages, but rather continued a development begun with the fall of ancient Rome.

The critical break and the new beginning were located at the end of antiquity. Those writers concerned more with the history of art and literature had a different point of view.

For them, the period that followed the breakdown of Rome was likely to be seen as a

period of decline, and their own age as a time of revival or rebirth. Petrarch himself was seen as the inaugurator of a revival of letters. As we shall see later, a similar conception was applied to art, with Giotto as the man who "brought painting back to life." It was in Renaissance Italy that the term Middle Ages was coined in the Italian form *Medioevo*. The humanist historians took a step in the direction of modern historical writing by rejecting the supernatural as a historical force, much as a present-day historian, though he may espouse a religious interpretation of history, will, in his strictly historical writing, stick to what can be proved from the documents.

The humanists wrote history on the human plane, seeking the causes and meaning of events in human motives and conditions. The Florentine humanists of the fifteenth century made a profound discovery; they saw the connection between the state of politics and society, on the one hand, and cultural achievement on the other. They considered that the greatness of their city, with the rebirth of arts that had been lost, was a consequence of its political freedom. Leonardo Bruni found a relationship between Roman freedom and Roman literature: With the loss of freedom in the transition from republic to empire, the creative vitality of the Romans was lost. Bruni's great contribution to historical writing was his *History of the Florentine People*. He followed Cicero in referring to history as the guide of life (*magistra vitae*) and in asserting that the two most important requirements for history are accuracy and distinction of style. Like the ancients, Bruni considered history a branch of literature. He was a fervent Florentine patriot (though, like some other zealous Florentines, he was not a native of the city) and a believer in Florentine freedom, and his history is pervaded by his republican sentiments. Florence he saw as a second Rome, inheriting the place of Rome itself. In his use of materials, Bruni showed modern aspects; he rejected miracles and legends, even those in the works of the ancient classical authors. He used materials from the Florentine archives, applied critical standards to the judgment of his sources, and sought the underlying causes of events.

The history of Italy as a whole was written by **Flavio Biondo**, in his work on Italy from the decline of the Roman Empire. Like his other books, this one was based on indefatigable research and filled with facts. Unlike Bruni's history, it does not live up to the humanistic ideal of history as literature; the style is ponderous. Valuable and widely read, it helped to establish the fall of the Roman Empire as the end of a historical epoch and the beginning of a new one. He may, therefore, be called one of the first medievalists.

Like Bruni, he celebrated the rise of the cities, which had restored the dignity of Italy. Thus these fifteenth-century humanist historians, writing in Latin, helped to establish the ideals and methods of historical study upon which the great Italian historians of the next century, Machiavelli and Guicciardini, were to build.

HUMANISM AND EDUCATION

In the field of education, as elsewhere, humanists aimed at the revival in a form applicable

to their own time. In the process of adapting and developing ancient ideas, they founded a liberal education in the modern world.

As we have seen, humanism was in the rhetorical tradition, which emphasized correct expression as preparation for public life. This applies particularly to education. The educational theory of ancient Rome emphasized the training of the orator, and the orator, in a famous description by Cato, was a "good man skilled in speech." Thus the ability to speak well must always be accompanied by moral goodness. Cicero, in his work *De oratore* (55 b.c.), required also a knowledge of the accomplishments of the Greeks as part of the education of a Roman. An influential work in the Renaissance was Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* (The education of an orator, c. a.d. 95), of which the first complete copy was found by Poggio at the Council of Constance, although incomplete texts had been available earlier. He defined the orator as "the man who can really play his part as a citizen and is capable of meeting the demands both of public and private business, the man who can guide a state by his counsels, give it a firm basis by his legislation, and purge its vices by its decisions as a judge."

As a successful teacher he knew that learning must be voluntary, that it must be interspersed with holidays and games, and that the pupil's health and vigor should be attended to. He was opposed to the harsh corporal punishments, which were common in his day and long afterward. The humanist educators of Renaissance Italy followed these Roman ideas carefully, adding the element of training in Christianity. The traditions of chivalry also left an imprint on educational practice. All these points are clearly illustrated in the earliest important humanist educational treatise, the *De ingenuis moribus* (On Noble Customs and Liberal Studies) of Pier Paolo Vergerio, written at the end of 1401 or in 1402 and dedicated to the son of the ruler of Padua, a member of the Carrara family. His educational program encompasses moral and religious training, together with physical fitness and instruction in the bearing of arms. As for the academic, or liberal studies, he defines them as follows:

We call those studies liberal which are worthy of a free man; those studies by which we attain and practise virtue and wisdom; that education which calls forth, trains and develops those highest gifts of body and of mind which ennoble men, and which are rightly judged to rank next in dignity to virtue only.⁵

These studies include history, moral philosophy, and eloquence as the most important subjects. Literature (or "letters"), grammar, logic, and rhetoric are also included. Poetry and music are valuable for recreation. He also finds room for arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, and "the knowledge of nature," showing that what we call science was not to be neglected, though it occupied a secondary position. He also recommended that the special aptitudes and abilities of each student be noted, and that his education be adapted to his individual character. This treatise was influential and widely read. Other educational

theorists repeated the same themes, with different emphases. Leonardo Bruni wrote a little tract about 1405 on the education of women; he stressed religious and moral training, with the classical writers and the church fathers as the authors to be studied. The Renaissance saw an improvement in the educational and social status of women, who at least among the upper classes were sometimes given a humanistic education and an honored position in society.

Vittorino da Feltre at Mantua and Guarino da Verona at Ferrara put into practice the ideas we have discussed. Both emphasized training in correct expression; the study of classical Latin and Greek; the well-rounded training of the mental, moral and physical aspects of their pupils; and preparation for public life. Their training was not professional; they left that to others, who would teach their pupils later. They would have agreed that a humanistic, or liberal, education was eminently practical, since it fitted the pupil whatever his future profession to take his place in society. Just as humanism was not the only form of intellectual activity of that period, so humanistic education was not found everywhere; indeed, most schools were not in the hands of humanists, but it was the humanistic ideal that was to set the pattern for education, especially higher education, until fairly recent times.

CASTIGLIONE'S *COURTIER*

A detailed portrait of the ideal product of a humanistic education may be found in *Il Cortegiano* (The Courtier) of **Baldassare Castiglione** (1478-1529). The court, which forms the setting for the book's conversations, is the court of Urbino, governed at the time by the Montefeltro family. As in the case of Ferrara and Mantua, some of the smaller Italian states governed by hereditary ruling families made important contributions to the culture of the age. The cultivated life of the court of Urbino is reflected in the Courtier, in which all the participants in the conversations are real persons. Presiding over them is the duchess, Elisabetta Gonzaga an instance of the honored place occupied by women in at least the upper reaches of Italian Renaissance society. The conversations are supposed to have taken place in March 1507, at a time when most of the characters in the book were, in fact, at Urbino. Castiglione began writing the book about 1508, and worked on it intermittently for years; it was not printed until 1528.

The conversations are represented as continuing for four successive evenings, and are, therefore, divided into four books. The purpose of the discussion is to find the qualities needed to be a good courtier. Because of the dialogue form, it is possible for the author to present varying points of view on the topics that come up, but one opinion normally wins out and thus enables us to perceive Castiglione's true thoughts on the matter. It is decided that a perfect courtier ought to be of noble birth. His chief profession is that of arms. He must be neither too tall nor too short. He should be outstanding in horsemanship, tournaments, hunting, swimming and other martial and athletic activities. He should

always be modest about his attainments, and should always strive to give the impression that no special effort or long practice is required for them. The courtier should use the Italian language well, and should be able to use other modern languages; he should, of course, be well educated in the classical tongues. Besides all this, he should be skilled in the use of several musical instruments, and be able to draw and paint. But the most important quality of the courtier is goodness. The question of morality is involved with his service to his prince. The courtier must reverence and serve his prince, to be sure, but without flattery, and never in dishonest matters. If he finds that his prince is wicked, he must forsake him. Many other topics are covered, including dress, bearing and gestures, friendships, recreations and humor.

There is, in the third book, a discussion of the attributes of the ideal gentlewoman, the counterpart of the ideal courtier. She must be beautiful, chaste, wise, witty, gentle, and virtuous. She must be skilled in letters, music, painting, dancing and sports, but always modest. The tone is very laudatory of women and their abilities and accomplishments.

Toward the end of the work, in the last book, the question is raised whether the courtier can love. If he has acquired all the skills and knowledge that have been prescribed, he will no longer be young. Does this mean that the love of woman will no longer be possible for him? To this question, Pietro Bembo, one of the most distinguished humanists and scholars of the time, provides a long and eloquent answer, which is something of a climax for the whole work.

Bembo's answer is not original; it is based on Socrates' exposition of the nature of love in Plato's Symposium, modified in two respects: it deals with the love of men for women; it has been given a Christian character. Bembo describes a love which ascends from the plane of the senses through various stages to the pure love of God, the embodiment of all beauty. This conception of a supersensual, spiritual love, expressed most fully by the Florentine Neoplatonists, was to have a great career in the Renaissance, and not just in Italy. Dante and Petrarch had already expressed it; Michelangelo embodied it in his art; many others paid at least lip service to it. Renaissance thought and literature cannot be fully appreciated without realizing how widespread and pervasive the idea of courtly love was.



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CHAPTER 6

ITALIAN VERNACULAR LITERATURE

During the Middle Ages, the language of learning had been Latin, but alongside this international tongue there existed in each country the popular spoken language, the vulgar tongue or vernacular. Literary works in the vernacular came into being from an early date: *Beowulf*, forexample, in Anglo- Saxon England; the *Song of Roland*, the most famous of the poems of chivalry, in France about the end of the eleventh century.

It was medieval France from which the most powerful cultural influences radiated throughout western Europe, including Italy. In the field of poetry, there were two traditions from France that had particular importance for Italian literature. One was the tradition of epic poetry, with stories based on the real and legendary feats of Charlemagne and his knights. Roland, the heroic follower of Charlemagne who died fighting the Moslem infidels, was to appear in Italian literature as Orlando. The other influential French tradition was that of courtly love, spread by the troubadours. There were troubadours in the feudal

courts of northern Italy in the later years of the twelfth century.

These traditions came to Italy originally in the French language, although there was some literary work in the Italian dialects in the twelfth century. By the following century, the Italian dialects had won out, and the thirteenth has been called the first century of Italian literature. One of the first important poets in Italian was St. Francis of Assisi@.

A significant literary influence was exercised by the court of the emperor Frederick II (1220-50) in Sicily. The emperor himself probably wrote poetry and had at his court a number of poets. From this circle there developed forms that were to set the pattern for Italian lyric poetry. One of these forms was the sonnet, which was to have not merely an Italian but an international importance. The sonnet is normally a fourteen-line poem, divided into an eight-line section (or octave) followed by a six-line conclusion (or sestet).

In Italy, as in other countries, the beginning of vernacular literature found the language broken up into dialects, one of which eventually became the basis for the common written language. In spite of the importance of Sicily and some other areas in the production of Italian literature, the predominant dialect in Italy came to be Tuscan, the form of the language that was used in Florence. By the second half of the thirteenth century the most important Italian writing was being done in that dialect. The influence and

prestige of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, who all used Tuscan as the basis for their Italian writing, fixed the form of the Italian literary language. It was a language that was different from any actually spoken in Italy, but Tuscan was its basis, though modified by Latin and by other Italian dialects. It is also true that there were still some parts of Italy where it was not used, but for all practical purposes it can be said that Italy had a common written language by the end of the fourteenth century. Some of the late thirteenth-century poets developed a theme that was to be of immense importance: the combination of love for a lady with virtue and nobility. Only the good can feel love; service to a lady exalts the lover; the lady is a being of wondrous beauty and nobility. Not all the love poems were so idealistic; some were more down to earth, containing qualities of sensuousness, realism, and humor that were to play a part in later Italian work. There was also religious and even political poetry, and there was work in Italian prose, though mostly in the form of translations from other languages.

Though Dante had predecessors, to whom he acknowledged indebtedness, he towered above them all in both prose and verse. When he was still a young man probably before he reached thirty he wrote *La vita nuova* in verse and prose. It consists of a number of poems written in praise of Beatrice, with prose commentaries. It forms a sort of record of his relationship to his lady, a relationship that seems to have existed largely in the mind and heart of the poet.

There is no way of knowing what feelings, if any, Beatrice had for him or indeed whether they actually had much contact with one another. What is revealed in the book is Dante's poetic genius and the depth of his feeling and intellectual power. Some of the poems are sonnets. The book ends with the death of Beatrice, which transforms the poet and gives him the "new life" of the title. Beatrice is now in Heaven, and Dante, at the end of his book, expresses his hope of writing about her what has never been written of any woman. This hope was fulfilled in the *Divine Comedy*®. Among his other contributions to Italian literature was the *Convivio* or *Banquet*, which he did not finish. Like *La vita nuova*, it is made up of poems with prose commentary, and its subject is philosophy. Even in its incomplete form it covers a wide range of topics. At that time the word philosophy had a less specialized meaning than it bears today; it referred to all secular knowledge, as distinguished from divine knowledge, or theology. One of the topics discussed in the *Convivio* is a justification for writing in Italian rather than in Latin. Dante devoted a whole treatise to this subject *De vulgari eloquentia* written in Latin and never completed. In the part he finished he upholds the use of the vernacular language for poetry. In connection with the Italian language, he claims that none of the existing dialects is worthy of being used for literature, and that, therefore, a common language must be created.

Dante's greatest work, the *Divine Comedy*®, remains

the greatest work of Italian literature and one of the supreme poetic and intellectual achievements of our civilization. The attitude of Dante's great successor, Petrarch, to the *Divine Comedy* is interesting. When questioned about it by his friend Boccaccio, who revered Dante's memory, Petrarch expressed grave reservations. For one thing, it was in the vernacular, which meant it appealed to common, unlearned folk. But Petrarch objected above all to the fact that Dante had discussed great philosophical and theological subjects directly in his poem, and this he condemned. In Petrarch's opinion, poetry should deal with such matters indirectly, covering them with a comely veil: in other words, figuratively rather than literally. Since Petrarch was an excellent judge of literature as well as a great Italian poet, it is conceivable that his criticisms of Dante are not without an element of jealousy, possibly unconscious; he may well have known that Dante's poem was an achievement that stood by itself. Petrarch claimed that his own Italian poems were trifles and meant little to him in comparison with his Latin works. This disclaimer cannot be taken at face value, because surviving manuscripts show he never ceased to work on these "trifles," polishing and improving them. He also arranged them in the order he wanted them to have. The collection, known usually as the *Canzoniere*, therefore, meant a good deal more to him than he chose to admit publicly. The *Canzoniere* established Petrarch as one of the greatest of all lyric poets.

If he had never written a word of Latin, he would still occupy a permanent place in literature although his historical importance would be much reduced. Most of the poems are sonnets addressed to Laura, and he divided the collection as a whole into two parts, before and after her death. There are poems in the collection on other subjects, such as friendship and the corruption of the papal Curia at Avignon. Most of the work, however, is made up of poems celebrating his love for Laura. In these he gives meaning to the changes on love in all its aspects of joy and sorrow, hope and despair. Laura's feelings toward the poet are never made clear, but he does admit that she kept their relationship pure. After her death she serves as an inspiration to higher virtue, calling him to Heaven. Laura is somewhat more concrete than Dante's Beatrice, who is never described in any concrete terms. In the case of Laura, the poet mentions her hair, her eyes, the way she walks. It is to be inferred that his feeling for her had elements of passion and desire, yet there prevails the concept of the beloved as a holy and exalted being, and to love her is an ennobling experience. Some of the longer poems, which do not deal with Laura, are of great beauty and significance. The *Italia mia* (My Italy) is a great patriotic poem, calling on the Italian princes to end their strife and get rid of their foreign mercenaries who are defiling the beautiful land of Italy. In this magnificent poem, Petrarch writes not as a Florentine but as an Italian, and expresses a fervent and heartfelt love for Italy. It is one of the greatest of all patriotic poems, and was

quoted by Machiavelli in the concluding passage of *The Prince*. The last poem in the collection is a noble invocation to the Virgin, "Vergine bella," addressing the Mother of God. The poet confesses his transgressions, admits his unworthiness, and pleads to be received graciously.

While much of this was traditional, Petrarch was at the same time an initiator. His influence on later poets in many countries was incalculable. It was he who gave the sonnet its vogue during the Renaissance; in his hands it became an admirable medium for the disciplined, highly concentrated expression of a feeling or idea. Many poets after him addressed sonnet-sequences to their ladies, stressing thoughts and emotions for which he had shown the way. An example is the boast, made by him and poets after him, that it was his verse that would make the object of his devotion live for future ages. Ronsard and Du Bellay in France; and Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare in England are just a few of the more outstanding Renaissance poets who, while preserving their own original voices, owed something to their great predecessor. Also in the vernacular are Petrarch's *Triumphs*: The Triumphs of Love, Chastity, Death, Fame, Time, and Eternity. Although unfinished, these poems also became famous and often formed the subjects of works of visual art.

The third member of the great triumvirate, Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-75), was the illegitimate son of a

Florentine merchant and banker. Boccaccio spent much of his youth in Naples, where his father represented the great Florentine banking house of Bardi. Though he studied business and law, he was always interested primarily in literature, and from an early age was writing both verse and prose. He wrote a good deal about his love affair with a lady he called Fiammetta (Little Flame). Nothing is known of her except that her name was Maria, and it is not clear how much of what he wrote about their relationship is true, and how much is fiction. In any case, his conception of love is much more earthy and far less spiritual than that of Dante and Petrarch. Boccaccio later lived in and near Florence and was employed by the Florentine government in various capacities. In 1373, the city established a lectureship on the Divine Comedy and invited Boccaccio, who had long revered Dante, to be the first lecturer. Because of failing health, he was unable to finish the lectures. He died in 1375.

Although Boccaccio owes his place in Italian literature primarily to his work in prose, he also wrote a great deal of verse. In both mediums, he used a wide range of literary forms and broke new ground in a number of fields. His *Fiammetta*, which tells the story of a woman jilted by her lover, concentrates on the heroine's mental and emotional state, and is the earliest Italian psychological romance, a precursor of the psychological novel. Among his poetic works is the *Filostrato*, which tells the story of Troilus and Cressida, later taken up by Chaucer and Shakespeare.

His *Teseida* was an epic poem. Boccaccio is also responsible for introducing into Italian literature the pastoral element, derived from antiquity, emphasizing the lives and loves of nymphs and shepherds in the setting of fields and forests.

His work had an enormous influence, not only in Italy but also in other countries. The number of outstanding authors who followed him in one way or another is amazing. But of all his works, the most important and influential is the *Decameron*.

The *Decameron* was probably finished in about 1353. Its setting is the plague year of 1348. Ten young people seven women and three men meet in the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, and decide that they will escape the plague by going out into the surrounding countryside. They spend their time in lovely villas, provided with every form of natural beauty and with all the amenities that can make their lives agreeable. To while away the time, they decide to tell stories; each one will tell a story a day, and for each day a different member of the group will be in charge. The result is one hundred stories that make up the body of the work.

The setting is not without its importance. There is a vivid description of the plague, which is one of the best sources available for the nature of the epidemic. The gardens in which the storytellers meet express Boccaccio's love of nature, his delight in those things that appeal to the senses the colors and fragrance of

the flowers, the songs of the birds, the taste of the choice fruits and wines. The orderliness of the gardens attests to his adherence to reason. As the setting expresses the ideals of nature and reason, the stories exalt love. The love that Boccaccio celebrates is not the spiritual flame that illuminated the mind and heart of Dante and, perhaps to a lesser degree, of Petrarch. It is a more down-to-earth passion, with frankly physical elements. It has rights that are not to be denied. Boccaccio seems to be saying that any obstacles that stand in the way of love are to be overcome and set aside. If a young woman has been married off to an old man who cannot satisfy her, she is perfectly justified in finding a young man who can. For a woman to refuse her love to a man who loves her is a grave offense, for which she deserves to suffer. To be a monk or a nun and take a vow of celibacy, is against nature; some of the most hilarious stories concern themselves with nature's revenge on these unnatural restrictions. Other stories aim their shafts at hypocritical, lazy, lustful monks and priests, like Brother Onion who fleeces the yokels with his collection of spurious relics. (Sixth Day, Tenth Story). Abraham the Jew, who had decided to become a Christian, goes to Rome. A Christian friend is sure that the corruption he sees there will change his mind, but he returns more firmly convinced than ever that Christianity is the true faith; to survive the conditions which prevail at Rome Christianity must have divine support. (First Day, Second Story). Through these one hundred stories the whole panorama of fourteenth-

century society moves. There are kings and nobles, merchants and soldiers and rustics. There is Giotto the painter, who "brought painting back to life." There are men and women, old and young, good and not-so-good. Boccaccio was a master storyteller; the stories move with verve and gusto, and in spite of their large number they do not become monotonous. They are frank and often scandalous, but they are told by a man with such a wholehearted love of life and such a broad acceptance of human nature that no fair-minded reader, even in ages more easily shocked than our own, could take offense at them. Most of the stories are happy and lighthearted, but some are serious, even sad. Sometimes, there is an important point made; in the story of the three rings (third story, first day), later used so effectively by the German writer Lessing in *Nathan the Wise*, is an impressive case for religious toleration.

The death of Boccaccio marked the end of a great period of Italian literature, and it was followed by about a century in which little noteworthy work was accomplished in the vernacular. This was no doubt connected with the development of humanism and the practice of most of the best writers and thinkers to devote themselves to Latin and Greek. However, this may not be the sole explanation, because a similar decline is observable in other countries in which humanism had not attained the importance it possessed in Italy. One of the most distinguished men of the fifteenth century, Leon Battista Alberti, stands

out in this connection for his advocacy of the Italian language. He not only wrote in Italian, but he also sponsored, with Medici financial backing, a contest for writers of Italian verse. The contest was held in 1441, but apparently did not stimulate any great outburst of creative activity in Italian. During the second half of the century, Lorenzo de' Medici\$ became the central figure in a genuine revival of Italian as a literary language. Not only was he a patron of letters but he also was himself an accomplished poet. He and the members of his circle firmly believed in the suitability of the vernacular for poetry. Lorenzo's work reflected not only the influence of Dante and Petrarch but also of the poetry of popular tradition. He aimed at expressing the thoughts and feelings of the people.

Though Lorenzo was an accomplished writer of love poetry, his deepest feelings were for nature. He has been called the pioneer of modern outdoor poetry. For the popular festivals of Florence he wrote songs that exhibit a coarseness and low moral tone, which were probably in keeping with the nature of the occasions. In them can be found the theme of the fleeting nature of youth and happiness. Probably the most famous passage in his poetry deals with this idea, affirming the beauty and impermanence of youth and urging that whoever wishes to be happy should be so now, for we cannot be certain about tomorrow. He wrote in the pastoral tradition as well. One of his works has been called the first Italian pastoral idyll and is a plea of a shepherd to his love. Unlike many other writers of

pastoral, who were often highly sophisticated poets adopting what for them was an artificial and unreal tradition, Lorenzo was able to understand and feel the emotions of a peasant.

Many of his best poems are religious and they evidence a deep religious feeling. One theme is the soul searching for God and despairing because it is unable to find Him. Another is that all happiness on earth consists of the knowledge and love of God. There is a vein of disillusionment and bitterness in his poetry, which appears in his reflections on the nature of government. He declares that the ruler must be the servant of servants and that power is not sweet but rather a source of trouble and fatigue.

The humanists in Lorenzo's circle, unlike their predecessors, did some of their writing in Italian, and did not scorn the vulgar tongue. One of his close associates was Angelo Poliziano (1454-94), one of the most accomplished of all the humanists. An outstanding classical scholar, he wrote in Greek as well as in Latin and Italian. In Italian he wrote a great number of lyric poems. Like Lorenzo, he expressed both a love of nature and a consciousness of the fleeting character of youth and beauty. He wrote the first secular play in Italian, entitled Orfeo, dealing with the mythological story of Orpheus and Eurydice. As previously noted, the stories that had grown up around the figure of Charlemagne, and in particular the story of Roland, came into Italy, and in the

fourteenth century Tuscan minstrels had written and sung poems on such themes. Roland became Orlando, and one of these poems was entitled *Orlando*. Among its characters was a giant named Morgante, who is converted by Orlando and becomes his companion.

During the Renaissance, several important poems were inspired by the Charlemagne stories. One of them was written by Luigi Pulci (1432-84) who belonged to Lorenzo's circle. His poem was // *Morgante Maggiore* and was a free rewriting of Orlando. In addition to religious and chivalric elements, Pulci adds a great deal of humor. There is also a learned theological discussion. The *Morgante*, because of its author's humor and mockery, has been called the first modern burlesque poem.

Two other writers of epics based on the story of Roland were in the service of the Este rulers of Ferrara. Matteo Maria Boiardo (1441-94) wrote the unfinished *Orlando innamorato* (Orlando in Love). This was something new, because it was the first Charlemagne epic in which a love story was the chief element. Boiardo had a rich imagination, and his poem, unfinished though it is, abounds in interesting episodes of his own devising. He too combined chivalrous with humorous elements, but his humor was not so boisterous as that of Pulci.

His work was later completed by another writer of the court of Ferrara, Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533), who served the Este family in numerous official capacities.

He wrote poetry in both Latin and Italian until in 1506 he turned his attention to finishing Boiardo's epic. What he created was actually a new work, and it proved to be the greatest of its kind. He called it *Orlando furioso* (Orlando Mad). He is much more strongly influenced by classical poetry than his predecessors in the field, though he also drew on his familiarity with Italian poetry and the chivalric tradition.

The poem combines the conflict of Christians and Moslems, on the one hand, with the love story of Roland. It is, in fact, Roland's jealousy arising from his thwarted love that makes him mad. The poem leads up to the marriage of the mythical ancestors of the Este family, and throughout the work Ariosto brings in episodes in the history of the family and manages to honor those who ruled in his day. There are a number of love stories and many adventurous episodes. Magical and supernatural forces play an important part. Variety, beauty, vigor, and lifelikeness are among the poem's outstanding qualities. The places are convincing as real places, and the characters recognizable as real people. As in the poems of Pulci and Boiardo, humor is an important part of Ariosto's poetry, with irony the prevailing aspect.

Ariosto's poetry also was technically outstanding. In rhythm and diction he attained great distinction. This reflects his own natural talent, his study of the great Florentine writers, and the pains he took in polishing his work. Through the years he continually revised his

poetry; the first edition of *Orlando furioso* appeared in 1516, but the third and final one was not published until 1532. It was popular and influential; two hundred editions were published in Italy in the sixteenth century, not to mention imitations and translations. Among the many poems it influenced was Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*.

In a discussion of Italian literature of the Renaissance, Machiavelli claims a place. His political and historical works, already discussed, are important from a literary standpoint, because of the vigor, clarity, and eloquence of their prose style. But his genius extended beyond politics and history. He also wrote plays, poems, and stories.

Of these the most important is his comedy *Mandragola*, the most famous of all Italian plays of the Renaissance. Its subject is not especially elevating, since it deals with a successful seduction. The poetry is cleverly worked out, the dialogue is vivid, and in some of the persons Machiavelli achieves a level of characterization that surpasses all other Italian playwrights of his day. There is some sharp satire on the church; it is a priest who serves to help bring about the seduction, but who also performs his ecclesiastical duties conscientiously. Machiavelli also wrote a dialogue on the Italian language, in which he defended the suitability of the Florentine dialect, as being alone fit for literary use. Thus the Renaissance saw outstanding work in Italian literature, which had

an enduring importance not only in the land of its origin but also in many other countries. Dante's *Divine Comedy* is one of the greatest of all works of literature; Petrarch's love poetry has never been surpassed, and Boccaccio is one of the finest storytellers. Certain literary forms were introduced or reintroduced by Italian writers: The sonnet was to have a remarkable vogue; the pastoral tradition was to be cultivated by many important writers; the chivalric epic had its own imitators. There were, to be sure, areas in which the Italians proved less interested or less successful. As Burckhardt pointed out over a century ago, they did not produce great tragedies. Indeed, the depth of thought and feeling, the austere seriousness of Dante, did not find many echoes. For the same kind of depth and nobility, one may look to the poems of that supreme genius, Michelangelo, who will be dealt with in the next chapter.



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CHAPTER 7

ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ART

The Italian Renaissance was one of the most productive periods in the history of art, with large numbers of outstanding masters to be found in many centers and in all the major fields painting, sculpture, and architecture. In Florence, in the first half of the fifteenth century, there were great innovators in all these fields, whose work marked a beginning of a new era in the history of art. These innovators included Masaccio in painting, Brunelleschi in architecture, and Donatello in sculpture. Their new ideals and methods were systematized in the theoretical writings of their friend and fellow artist Leon Battista Alberti. There can also be observed in this period a change in the social status of the artist. Heretofore, he had been an artisan, a craftsman. Now the attempt was made to include artists among the practitioners of the "liberal arts," which were regarded as being on a higher level than the "mechanical arts." These efforts bore fruit, and some of the great masters, for example, Titian and Michelangelo, by the force of their genius and personality, were able to achieve a measure of status and respect rarely enjoyed by their predecessors. The idea of artistic genius became popular; Michelangelo was called "divine" because of the greatness of his creative powers.

In the Renaissance, art and science were closely connected. Both the artist and the scientist strove for the mastery of the physical world, and the art of painting profited by two fields of study that may be called scientific: anatomy, which made possible a more accurate representation of the human body, and mathematical perspective. Perspective in painting is the rendering on a two-dimensional surface of the illusion of three dimensions. Previous painters had achieved this effect by empirical means, but the discovery of a mathematical method of attaining a three-dimensional impression is attributed to Brunelleschi in about 1420. Henceforth, the method could be systematically studied and explained, and it became one of the chief instruments of artists, especially painters, in their pursuit of reality. Some men were both artists and scientists, notably Leonardo da Vinci and Piero della Francesca. It is doubtful whether they would have understood our distinction between art and science.

PAINTING

we may begin with Florentine painting. The techniques favored by the Florentines were tempera and fresco. For tempera painting a dry surface was used. A wooden panel was grounded with several coats of plaster in glue, and the composition was then copied from a drawing. The colors were tempered with egg or vegetable albumin. The fresco technique, used for the mural paintings in Florentine churches, involved

painting on wet plaster. The sketch was first copied on the plaster wall in rough outline, and the part on which the painter was going to work during a given day was then covered with fresh plaster. The painter had to redraw the part that had been covered by the new plaster and add the colors. As the plaster dried, the colors became a permanent part of it.

The beginning of the great Florentine school of painting came in the Middle Ages, with Cimabue and his great pupil Giotto. Cimabue (d. 1302) was trained in the Byzantine tradition, which produced stiff, two-dimensional, hieratic figures, capable of great dignity but not intended to be exact representations of nature. Cimabue set out to break with this tradition and to bring a more lifelike appearance and deeper religious emotion into painting.

Giotto (Giotto di Bondone, d. 1337) is one of the greatest figures in the history of Florentine painting, and his greatness was recognized very early. Before his death he was honored and apparently prosperous, and his praises were sung constantly after his death. His enormous prestige helped to establish the distinction between the artisan, or craftsman, and the great artist. He was praised for having brought back to life the buried art of painting, and thus he helped to establish the idea of a rebirth, or renaissance. He aimed to represent three-dimensional reality on a plane surface, and succeeded to a remarkable extent, though he lived a century before the discovery of

mathematical perspective.

His skill may be seen in the series of frescoes he painted in the Arena (Scrovegni) Chapel in Padua, illustrating scenes from the lives of the Virgin Mary and Jesus. Here the artist was able to endow his human figures with a convincing appearance of mass and solidity. This imparted to them a sense of dignity and nobility, which enhanced both the human interest and the religious feeling of the paintings. He also arranged these figures in significant relationships with one another, and placed them against architectural backgrounds, which, however deficient from a naturalistic point of view, served admirably to unify the composition and to give a feeling of depth. These characteristics may be seen in the scene of Joachim and the Shepherds.

Giotto had no real successors until the following century, though he had imitators. In the second half of the fourteenth century, however, painting was dominated by the International Gothic style, which spread from Italy to northern Europe by way of Avignon and returned to Florence in the early fifteenth century. This style abandoned the effort to achieve three-dimensionality and concentrated on decorative effects: bright colors, elaborate costumes, and other appurtenances of courtly art. The figures tend to be thin, flat, and elegant, and there is great realism in the depicting of details. Gentile da Fabriano, who worked in Florence in the early 1420s, brought this style to the

city. It was Masaccio (1401-28) who, in his brief and amazing career, was the real successor of Giotto and revolutionized Florentine painting. He too gave his figures a grave and noble dignity. His frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel of the church of Santa Maria del Carmine in Florence did much to determine the course of painting from that time on. Of these the most important is the Tribute Money, illustrating Matthew 17: 24-27. We observe the grandeur of the figures, the dramatic unity of the composition, and the sense of controlled movement imparted through the attitudes and gestures of the persons depicted. We see also Masaccio's command of aerial perspective, which was something new. The action takes place in the open air, and the artist gives the feeling of the atmosphere as a veil between the painting and the viewer. The sixteenth century art historian Vasari gives a formidable list of great artists who studied the works in the Brancacci Chapel. The great Florentine painters, and many others, did indeed follow along the lines laid out by Masaccio.

One of the artists who showed the influence of Masaccio was the Dominican friar, Fra Angelico (c.1400 55). He was a devoutly religious man whose piety is reflected in his paintings, which combine medieval elements with an understanding of what Masaccio had done. His figures are often formal and hieratic, arranged for decorative effect as in a Byzantine mosaic. He delighted in fresh, lovely young faces and bright colors. On the other hand, he learned

to produce an effect of mass, to use perspective and manipulate space, and to express movement. There is great tenderness, serenity, and human feeling in his work, a joy in this world and in the blessed one to come. The Florentine painters of the last half of the fifteenth century, or Quattrocento, turned away from the severe and noble art of Masaccio to a striving for sweetness and charm, and expressed themselves in terms of line rather than mass or light and shade. At the same time, however, there were still Florentine painters who pursued the investigation of perspective and anatomy. Paolo Uccello (1397-1475) was fascinated by foreshortening and perspective, and some of his works are almost textbook exercises in the methods of producing these effects. The Pollaiuolo brothers, Antonio and Piero, were greatly interested in the study of anatomy. The more important of the two was Antonio (c.1432-98), who was a sculptor and an engraver as well as a painter. His choice of the Labors of Hercules as a subject gave him opportunities to study the nude in violent action and, therefore, the muscular structure of the body.

Of the artists whose vision was primarily in terms of line, the greatest was Botticelli (Alessandro di Mariano Filipepi, 1445 1510). He was affected both by the Florentine Neoplatonism of his time, which will be discussed later, and by the preaching of Savonarola. Few if any artists have equaled his mastery of line as a means of expressing movement and creating figures of exquisite beauty. His two most famous mythological

paintings, the Primavera ("Spring") and Birth of Venus were done for a member of the Medici family and contain elaborate allegorical meanings probably worked out by the philosopher Marsilio Ficino and intended to teach moral lessons. It is not necessary to understand these meanings in order to respond to the delicate and lyrical charm of the figures and the painter's delight in nature. The wistful melancholy that appears on the faces of many of his figures contrasts with his character as described by Vasari, who tells us that Botticelli was a merry fellow with a fondness for practical jokes.

With the passing of time, however, his style and subject matter changed. The influence of Savonarola caused him to turn more to religious subjects, which he painted with great feeling. In his last years, perhaps because of the execution of Savonarola and the troubles of Italy, his earlier serenity was missing, and there is an atmosphere of bitterness and agitation. By the time of his death, his work was out of style. He had no part in the High Renaissance, which came into full bloom in art in the early years of the sixteenth century.

The High Renaissance style begins with the Last Supper of Leonardo da Vinci(1452-1519), painted in Milan while Leonardo was living there under the patronage of Ludovico the Moor. He worked on the painting from about 1495 to 1497. When compared to previous paintings of the same subject, its originality becomes apparent. All nonessentials have been

eliminated; the distant landscape, seen through the windows, heightens rather than distracts from the main subject. There are no human figures other than Jesus and his disciples. All are placed on one side of a long table; earlier artists had placed Judas across the table from the rest. To give dynamic character to a scene conceived in static terms, Leonardo chose the moment when Jesus announced one of the disciples would betray him. This terrible declaration sends a shock wave of feeling through the twelve. Each is clearly differentiated from the others in the attitude and gestures with which he reacts to the Master's words, and yet all form a unity. The twelve are divided into four groups of three, each group having its own distinct character. In the center is Jesus, whose posture forms a triangle, a form on which Leonardo's paintings were normally based. Jesus is serene and unmoved by the effect of his words. This center of rest contrasts with the excitement all around. The perspective is masterful, creating an illusion of depth enhanced by the distant view through the rear windows, symbolizing perhaps the cosmic significance of what is going on in this room. The human figures, in spite of their agitation, have a noble dignity.

These are the qualities of the High Renaissance style: simplicity; austere rejection of the incidental and the merely pretty; nobility and grandeur in the figures involved in actions of depth and significance. This was the style of Raphael at the peak of his career, of

Michelangelo at one point, and of Andrea del Sarto and Correggio. By the 1530s, some of these artists were dead, and the living ones had moved into new phases of their work, so that the High Renaissance was a brief period in the history of art.

Florentine painting culminated in the work of Michelangelo, to whom the concluding section of this chapter is devoted. Meanwhile a great school of painting developed in Venice. No painters of great distinction appeared there in the fourteenth century, certainly none who could stand comparison with Giotto.

In the fifteenth century, artists from other places, working in the city, gave a vital impetus to Venetian painting. The most influential of these was Antonello da Messina (c.1430 79), who arrived in Venice about 1475. It was he who introduced into Venetian art the technique of oil painting, which had been perfected by Flemish masters; Antonello may have learned it in Naples. He was an artist of great merit, a fine portrait painter and a master of perspective and foreshortening. He also influenced later Venetian painters by his skillful handling of light and shade.

The first important painter of Venice was Jacopo Bellini (c.1400 1470/71), founder of a famous family of artists. His most important paintings are lost, but two of his sketchbooks survived. He was trained in the International Gothic style and was interested in questions of perspective. He liked strange

backgrounds reminiscent of fairy tales and mythology. Some of the ideas in his sketchbooks were later developed more fully by his sons, Gentile and Giovanni.

Gentile Bellini (c.1429-1507) was so famous as a portraitist that in 1478 when the sultan Mohammed II requested the Venetian government to send him a skilled portrait painter, Gentile was chosen. He was also the first of the great painters to concern himself to a large extent with depicting the colorful life of Venice, and his paintings of great processions and pageants often have as their background the Square of St. Mark, such as the Procession of the Relic of the True Cross, from the Accademia, Venice.

Giovanni Bellini (c.1430-1516) is one of the greatest of all painters. His output was probably larger than that of any other fifteenth-century painter, and much of it survives. His work illustrates an important development in the patronage of art: He painted small pictures for private collectors on an unprecedented scale, as distinguished from the customary type of commissions from church and state, though, of course, he had many of these also. His early work shows the influence of his brother-in-law, Andrea Mantegna, in sharper outlines and greater angularity than Bellini was to show later. However, there were always great differences between them, as can be clearly seen by comparing their renderings of the Agony in the Garden, both of which now hang in the

National Gallery in London. (Illustrations pages 104 and 105) In spite of the points of resemblance, Bellini's version has a softness lacking in the harsher, more severe work of Mantegna. To a large degree this is due to one of Bellini's most conspicuous qualities, his command of light and atmosphere. It is possible in his paintings of outdoor scenes to tell easily what time of day is being represented, in this case early morning. His sensitive handling of landscape shows that he was aware of its emotional value, and for him it was a means of expressing religious feeling.

In his earlier work he employed the tempera medium, but he later adopted oil, which made possible a greater emphasis on effects of color. He led the way to the outstanding use of color which became a dominant feature of Venetian painting. In his later years, in keeping with the trend of the times and his uninterrupted artistic growth throughout his long life, he turned to more secular subjects, particularly those from classical mythology. An enormous influence was exerted on a whole generation of Venetian painters by the rather mysterious figure of Giorgione (c.1477-1510). Only a few paintings are universally ascribed to him, and they are full of puzzles. The work called The Tempest makes this clear. There is no general agreement as to the subject of this painting. There is no recognizable relationship between the figures, and it is not even clear that they are aware of one another. As in other works by Giorgione, each one seems lost in a private mood or reverie. The landscape, with its

stormy sky, is effectively presented. The paintings of Giorgione cast their spell largely by means of their idyllic landscapes, and it is possible that the real subject of his works is their emotional atmosphere, their mood of yearning and nostalgia. It is like an adult's dream of some enchanted realm where he may have dwelt in his childhood imaginings and which he has now lost. It is interesting that this mood should have appealed to the wealthy and practical society of Renaissance Venice; it gives a key to a side of the Venetian character that we might otherwise be able to discern only with difficulty.

Giorgione's influence can be seen in the early work of the greatest of the Venetian painters, Titian (Tiziano Vecellio, c.1490-1576). His Giorgionesque mood was never complete and did not last long; there was always a directness and forthrightness that contrasted with Giorgione's dreamy reverie. His Assumption of the Virgin, painted in 1516-18 as an altarpiece in the Venetian church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, made him famous and demonstrated his genius. The work pulsates with life and vigor, enhanced by the brilliance of the colors. His handling of the agitated mass of humans at the bottom is especially masterful; he has endowed the group with dramatic movement and feeling without being confused or obscure. The vigor and energy and the acceptance and enjoyment of the life of the senses which marked his art in the years that followed, are especially vivid in some of his paintings of mythological subjects. He was also a

great portraitist, commissioned by some of the greatest rulers in church and state. In his portraits, he succeeded, often unsparingly, in bringing out the psychological uniqueness of his subjects. For many years he worked in the service of the Hapsburgs, producing among other things a series of portraits of the emperor Charles V. He was also a great master of landscape, skilled like Giovanni Bellini and Giorgione in representing the atmospheric mood of certain times of day and night.

In his last years there are signs of a more tragic sense, especially in some of his religious paintings, such as the Mocking of Christ of about 1570. The colors have become subdued, and an intense religious feeling manifests itself as Titian approaches the end. His late works show the coming of the style known as Mannerism. The figures are sometimes seen from unusual angles, in twisted and agitated postures, and in an unearthly and flickering light. The resulting atmosphere of unease and discomfort is distinctly Mannerist, in contrast to the serene and balanced quality of the High Renaissance.

The work of another great Venetian artist of the sixteenth century, Tintoretto (Jacopo Robusti, 1518-94), can also be better described as Mannerist, and even as early Baroque, the next phase in artistic style. His vigor and productivity were enormous. One of his greatest achievements was the decoration of the rooms of the Scuola di San Rocco in Venice. It is a

large building, with many splendid rooms, and Tintoretto worked on its walls and ceilings for about forty years. The subject matter consisted of scenes from the Bible, but, no matter how familiar they were or how often depicted by other artists, Tintoretto's power of invention was so fertile that there is nothing hackneyed or repetitive about the paintings. Often the viewer witnesses the scene from above, from below, or at an unusual angle. The main figure is sometimes placed at one side, instead of in the center as in the Temptation of Christ. One characteristic feature is the presence of homely genre elements, which have the effect of heightening the sacred, supernatural events. There are remarkable feats of perspective and foreshortening. His religious paintings convey an intense, mystical, emotional piety. On the other hand, in the Doge's Palace in Venice, he painted some mythological works, intended to symbolize the wisdom of the Venetian government, that have an exquisite grace and charm and that contain some superb nudes. He was also, like the other great Venetian painters, an outstanding portraitist, and his portraits show many of the noble and confident members of the Venetian aristocracy.

Paolo Caliari (1528-88), commonly known as Veronese, his native city being Verona, is included among the artists of the Venetian school because he lived in Venice from about 1553. Though younger than Tintoretto, he does not share the latter's Mannerist characteristics, but rather harks back to the High

Renaissance with his splendid and dignified men and women in rich and sumptuous settings. Though there may be a lack of deep feeling in most of his work, he is one of the greatest of all decorative artists. His great Marriage at Cana, now in the Louvre shows his mastery of composition, his ability to draw together a vast number of characters in a single picture and yet maintain clarity and unity. In his last years he developed in the direction of deeper religious feeling. He also produced some pure landscape paintings works in which the landscapes are not backgrounds but the chief subjects. This was not common yet, and thus he stands as one of the pioneers in his field.

Central Italy also produced important developments in painting. We may start with the Sienese School. Though geographically close to Florence and influenced by it, the school had its own independent tradition, which in its turn affected Florentine art. In the fourteenth century, Sienese painting was of particular importance, and in the latter part of that century it determined the course of Florentine painting and spread beyond Italy to become a formative influence in the International Gothic style.

The first of the great Sienese painters, from whom the whole school descended, was Duccio di Buoninsegna, who was about fifteen years older than Giotto and who died in or before 1319. Like Giotto he undertook to solve the problem of representing three-dimensional space on a flat surface, but by different means. His

emphasis was on line, and his figures have a two-dimensional appearance, unlike the solid and massive figures of Giotto. His work is more lyrical and emotional, and this was to remain true of Sienese work. Yet Duccio was a master of composition and arrangement, color and light, form and movement, and thus succeeded in conveying an impression of spatial depth. The Deposition from the Cross, one of the scenes from the life of Jesus that he painted, displays his qualities.

One of the chief factors in the transmission of Italian influences to the north, where they helped to form the International Gothic style, was the work of the Sienese painter, Simone Martini (c.1284-1344). His crucial position in this development arises partly from the fact that he was summoned to Avignon in 1340 to serve the pope; as the papal residence, Avignon was at this period an international center for the spread of cultural influences. Simone, possibly a pupil of Duccio, did not equal his master in dramatic power or emotional depth, but his work is notable for charm, grace, and splendor, and he was sensitive to the beauty of features, gestures, and color.

In the fifteenth century, central Italy produced one of the towering artistic figures of the period, Piero della Francesca (c.1406/12-1492). He was born in Borgo San Sepolcro, near Urbino and Arezzo, and many of his most important works were executed in these three towns. Though it cannot be proved that he spent much

time in Florence, he mastered the elements of the Florentine tradition, including mathematics and perspective; in the later years of his life, he wrote mathematical treatises. If he did spend much time in Florence, as seems likely, this would help to account for the austere, grave dignity of his figures, with their calm, impassive faces and restrained gestures. In their noble composure they are above ordinary humanity and give a glimpse of man, not as he is but as he might be. The effect is enhanced by the generalized and idealized types that he portrayed, though his portraits of Federigo da Montefeltro of Urbino and his duchess show that Piero was a consummate portraitist when called upon to work in that field. The calmness and impersonality of his work is strengthened by his preference for pale, cool colors.

One of his impressive works is the Baptism of Christ, which can be seen today in the National Gallery in London. The most celebrated of the central Italian painters was Raphael (Raffaello Sanzio, 1483-1520), born in Urbino, where his father was court painter and poet. Raphael received some of his early training from Perugino, an artist distinguished by his command of spatial composition and an atmosphere of serenity and calm, qualities featured in Raphael's work. He had a gentle and impressionable nature, and absorbed influences from many sources. He was in Florence between 1505 and 1508, and here he studied anatomy and movement, typical concerns of Florentine painters, and was affected by the work of many of the

Florentine masters, especially Leonardo. By 1508 he had achieved so great a reputation that Pope Julius II called him to Rome to take part in the painting of the Vatican. Since Michelangelo was then working on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, and since, among others, the great architect Bramante was also in Rome, clearly Rome was now the artistic capital of Italy. The artists, however, were generally imported from other regions.

One of Raphael's most important commissions was to decorate the walls of the room known as the Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican with paintings representing the unity of all knowledge. Each wall is devoted to one of the great fields of study: theology, philosophy, poetry, and jurisprudence.

The painting representing Philosophy is known as the School of Athens. The great philosophers of antiquity, each posed in such a way as to make him a representation of the kind of philosophy that he espoused, appear in a noble and spacious architectural setting. In the center are Plato and Aristotle, engaged in conversation. Plato is pointing upward, in accordance with his idealistic philosophy; while Aristotle, the investigator of nature, points downward. The other philosophers are arranged singly or in groups, each distinct from the others and yet contributing to the unity of the whole. All fit comfortably into the space. Throughout there is a sense of dignity, grandeur, and serenity. Since the other walls of the room are devoted to the other fields

of human and divine knowledge, we are no doubt supposed to realize that there is no conflict between the sacred truths of the faith and the great ideas of the secular, particularly those of classical authors.

Raphael continued his work for Julius's successor, Leo X. He was made chief architect of the new St. Peter's on the death of Bramante in 1514, and inspector of antiquities for Rome and its surrounding area in the following year. Because of his tremendous popularity, he also received numerous private commissions. He produced some of the greatest portraits, including that of his friend Castiglione. His representations of the Madonna and Child are numerous and famous. His fame and the demands upon him became so great that both his work and his health suffered; much was left to assistants. Overburdened as he was, he became ill and died on his thirty-seventh birthday. Something remains to be said about the painting of northern Italy, excluding Venice. Though this area did not have so many outstanding masters as the other regions discussed, it had one of the outstanding Renaissance painters Mantegna. Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) was brought up in Padua where he was able to see the work of the sculptor Donatello, which greatly affected him. The other chief influence on him was classical antiquity, in which he developed an intense interest. He was a close student of classical remains, which he reproduced in his works with painstaking exactness. His work, as noted earlier, has a certain hardness and

severity; his figures often seem like statues of stone or metal. He was a master of illusionistic effects and of foreshortening, as seen in his painting of the Dead Christ.

The Paduan School had a great effect on the art of northern Italy in the latter half of the fifteenth century. This meant a spread of the characteristics associated with Donatello and Mantegna realism, a devotion to antiquity, and sometimes a certain harshness.

One other influence on northern Italian painting, which proved disastrous, was the work of Leonardo da Vinci, who was in Milan from about 1482 to 1499 and much of the time from 1508 to 1513. During the second period especially, his effect on Milanese painters was so overwhelming that it crushed the promising beginnings of a new style that had been evident there, replacing it with more or less sterile efforts to imitate him.

This brief survey of northern Italian painting, and of Italian Renaissance painting in general, may conclude with a mention of Correggio (Antonio Allegri, c.1489-1534), who gets his name from his native town. He is most closely connected with the city of Parma where he painted domes, for example, in the cathedral. These show the illusionistic character that had been inaugurated by Mantegna, who may have been his teacher, and that would be very popular with Baroque artists. The spectator looks from below at the Virgin rising into Heaven and at the swirling masses of

figures who are witnessing the event, and feels not like a spectator but like a participant.

Correggio had a lightheartedness that made him somewhat unfit for paintings requiring profound religious emotion, but he was superbly qualified for scenes from antique myth, especially those of an erotic nature. He is one of the greatest of all masters of the art of rendering the flesh and a great colorist and master of movement.

It is especially appropriate to end a discussion of Italian Renaissance painting with Correggio, because he anticipated developments which came much later not only Mannerism and the Baroque, but also even the art of the eighteenth century, particularly in France. The worldliness, grace, and charm of his mythologies, even their somewhat artificial character, make him at home in the company of such artists as Watteau and Boucher.

SCULPTURE

as in the case of painting, there arose the idea that the other arts too had been reborn. Lorenzo Valla had referred to a decline of painting, sculpture, architecture, and literature, and their revival in his age. According to the tradition that developed, the revival of painting was due to a return to nature, the revival of architecture came about through the influence of classical antiquity, and the rebirth of sculpture resulted from a combination of the two influences.

This view of a revival of the arts was accepted and propagated by the famous sixteenth-century art historian Giorgio Vasari. As far as sculpture is concerned, it is not wholly accurate, since classical influences were present in the Middle Ages.

Nevertheless, we can begin our brief survey of Renaissance sculpture with the artists who come first in Vasari's account, Nicola Pisano (active 1258-78) and his son Giovanni Pisano (c.1250-1314/19). Nicola probably came from southern Italy, but his most important work was done in Tuscany, where he worked as both sculptor and architect. His work shows the results of careful study of ancient monuments, including a Roman sarcophagus in Pisa, which contained reliefs telling the story of Phaedra and Hippolytus. In his reliefs for the pulpit in the Baptistery of Pisa, there is a Madonna based on the figure of Phaedra, a Samson derived from Hippolytus, and numerous other adaptations of themes from the same source. He is also famous for his reliefs on the pulpit in the cathedral of Siena.

While Nicola combined Gothic and classical elements, his son Giovanni represents part of a reaction against classical tendencies, a reaction that can be observed also in literature and that was contemporaneous with the predominance of the International Gothic style in painting. Nevertheless, Giovanni is equally a forerunner of the Renaissance. Although his themes and feeling were largely medieval, he made a great

advance in fidelity to nature. It has been said that his true successor was Giotto, the painter, rather than any of the sculptors who worked under him. In another respect also, Giovanni heralds something new; he seems to be the earliest artist to fight for release from the classification of artisan by his insistence on the value of his own individual personality. Though the records of his life are scanty, they show him in conflict with other artists, employers, and even the law. The inscriptions he left on his work, especially the pulpit in the cathedral of Pisa, show an extraordinary sense of his own worth. Though it was not uncommon for artists to leave self-praising inscriptions on their works, Giovanni went far beyond the others in exalting his own talents. Andrea Pisano (c.1290 1348-49) unrelated to Giovanni and Nicola is best known for his work in Florence, which includes the bronze reliefs on the South Doors of the Baptistery. On these doors, in the years 1330-36, he executed twenty-eight panels with scenes from the life of John the Baptist. They are outstanding for clarity and simplicity of design; the number of figures is kept small, and their relationships are clearly and forcefully indicated.

Lorenzo Ghiberti (1381?-1455) is an example of the individuality and self-consciousness that characterize the Renaissance. He wrote the earliest known autobiography of an artist, in which his pride and self-confidence find vivid expression. The same traits may account for the two self-portraits, which he placed on the East Doors of the Baptistery in Florence. This

practice of representing one's self among the figures in a painting or a work of sculpture became quite common among Renaissance artists; it was a sort of signature and an expression of the artist's own conception of his importance.

Ghiberti worked on the two Baptistery doors, with interruptions, during virtually his whole productive life. The North Doors

occupied him from 1403 to 1424, while his work on the East Doors lasted from 1425 to 1452. On the North Doors@, he was required to follow Andrea Pisano's pattern, with twenty-eight panels of New Testament scenes. His work has greater grace and charm than the more simple and direct work of Pisano. He was also beginning to use perspective, trying to give the illusion of space by the grouping of figures and the use of landscape and architecture. His greatest achievement was the East Doors, called "Gates of Paradise." For these doors, which carry reliefs depicting scenes for the Old Testament, he broke away from the scheme of twenty-eight small panels and divided the surface into ten larger ones. In each case he tells a story with several scenes on the same panel. An example is the Story of Joseph. Here are found Joseph sold into slavery, Joseph revealing himself to his brothers, and other episodes taken from the account in Genesis. In these magnificent works can again be seen Ghiberti's interest in creating the illusion of depth. He accomplished this partly by the

use of mathematical perspective, presumably learned from Brunelleschi, and partly by gradations in the relief. Architectural elements are also employed to produce perspective effects.

Many of Ghiberti's assistants on the doors became outstanding artists in their own right, and the most outstanding of these was Donatello (c.1386-1466). He was probably the greatest sculptor of the Italian Renaissance, with the single exception of Michelangelo, and had an influence far beyond his own field of sculpture. Though he was affected by the revival of antiquity and the study of ancient works, he was an original, in some ways a revolutionary, artist. His work is marked by realism and by an emphasis on the psychological and emotional state of his figures. His psychological range was enormous, as was his versatility; he was equally skilled in bronze, in wood, and in stone, and in both freestanding statues and in reliefs. Three examples from his work will illustrate something of his genius. His bronze relief Feast of Herod for the baptismal font in the baptistery of the cathedral of Siena, was done during the 1420s. It shows three scenes from the story of the beheading of John the Baptist, in three rooms arranged one behind the other. Notable are the use of the principles of linear perspective and, above all, the expression of strong feeling on the part of the foreground figures who see the head of John presented on a platter to Herod. Donatello's bronze David is another witness to his originality. It is the first freestanding nude statue of

the Renaissance, and its thoughtful and meditative David, standing over the body of the slain Goliath, is a new conception of a familiar subject. It is also an expression of an ideal of human physical beauty.

In 1443 Donatello went to Padua, where he spent ten years. The works he created there gave him the tremendous impact on North Italian art, which has already been mentioned. One of these was his equestrian statue of the condottiere Erasmo da Narni, known as Gattamelata ("Honeyed Cat"). It is one of the greatest of equestrian statues, rendered with dignity, assurance, and calm strength. In some of his other works done at the same period and in other late works, he expresses an intensity of religious emotion, and a self-revelation hardly to be found in any other artist and in no artist before his time.

Luca della Robbia (1400-82), though he did important work in marble and bronze, is best known for his development of the technique of sculpture in colored terra cotta. In this medium he did work of unparalleled simplicity and loveliness; the only other workers in this kind of terra-cotta sculpture were members of his family, who continued the tradition for a time, but who never rose to Luca's level. They had no successors, and the technique died out. The true successor of Donatello was the Florentine Andrea del Verrocchio (1435-88). He worked in a variety of media and forms as Donatello had done. His Colleoni monument is one of the two most famous equestrian statues of the

Renaissance (the other being the Gattamelata). Colleoni was also a condottiere and appears as a formidable and arrogant figure. The statue is less classical than Donatello's and has a greater sense of movement. The sculpture discussed in this chapter has been predominantly Florentine, because of the overwhelming importance of Florence in this branch of Renaissance art. There was much work going on elsewhere in Italy, some of it important, but reasons of space have compelled limitations in our discussion. The greatest of all Renaissance sculptors was Michelangelo, who, as stated earlier, will be dealt with at the end of the chapter.

ARCHITECTURE

Architecture in the Renaissance, like the other arts, was essentially Christian, though influenced by classical ideas and especially by the architectural treatise of the Roman architect and engineer Vitruvius, written in the first century B.C. The highest form of the art, for Renaissance architects, was the building of churches. Under the influence of Pythagorean and Platonic concepts, it was believed that God had created the cosmos as a mathematical harmony, in which the different parts were related to each other in harmonic mathematical ratios. A church built according to these ratios, therefore, would symbolize and partake of perfect beauty, and thus would help to lift the thought of the worshippers to God. For similar reasons, the circle was regarded by some artists and

thinkers as the ideal basis for a church plan, because it was the perfect figure and, therefore, the best symbol for God.

Vitruvius, in discussing temples, had claimed that the proportions of these buildings should correspond with those of the human figure. He had shown that a well-built man, with arms and legs extended, would fit perfectly into the circle and square, the most perfect figures. This idea appealed to Renaissance artists, and accounts for their drawing of Vitruvian figures, human figures with arms and legs outstretched, inscribed in squares and circles. Another ancient influence was Pythagoras, who held that the basic explanation of the universe lay in numbers and who had discovered that musical relationships could be expressed in mathematical terms. These musical-mathematical harmonies appeared to provide a key to the structure of the whole universe. There was a Pythagorean revival during the Renaissance, and it contributed to the endeavor to express in the proportions of buildings the most profound religious and philosophical conceptions. Architects applied these harmonic ratios to secular buildings as well as to churches for example, palaces, villas, and libraries.

The first great Renaissance architect was the Florentine Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446). He made several trips to Rome to study the remains of ancient buildings and learn the principles that had been used in their construction. The knowledge thus gained

helped him to solve the problem of constructing a dome for the cathedral of Florence. Though the building of the cathedral had begun in the last years of the thirteenth century, nobody had been able to work out a method of constructing the dome, which had to cover a space 140 feet across. Brunelleschi's solution was the dome that came to dominate the Florentine skyline from 1436, the year it was completed. Among his many other achievements we may mention the loggia, or open porch, of the Ospedale degli Innocenti (Foundling Hospital) of Florence, which was built between 1419 and 1424. It was the first such hospital in the world and the first truly Renaissance building. Here the architect shows the use of the mathematical proportions already referred to; the size of the columns is the basis for the other dimensions. The round arches, supported by slender columns, and the vaults, which consist of a series of small domes, owe much to classical examples.

Leon Battista Alberti (1404-72), a man of many talents, was one of the most important architects of the Renaissance. His purpose was to adapt the principles of classical architecture to the needs of his time, and his most notable achievements were his churches. In designing these, he used such classical elements as the Greek temple front and the Roman triumphal arch. One of his designs that was widely imitated was found in the Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, where he was called upon to redesign the facade. The high center section crowned by a classical

pediment, together with the scrolls on either side, and the organization into two stories may be recognized in many later churches. In addition to designing many other churches and secular buildings of importance, Alberti also wrote a treatise on architecture.

Bramante of Urbino (1444-1514) was the greatest architect of his time, though he apparently was a painter long before he became interested in architecture. He was in Milan, at the court of Ludovico the Moor, in 1481 or earlier, and stayed until the fall of Ludovico in 1499. There his ideas on architecture may have been influenced by discussions with Leonardo da Vinci, who was very much interested in architecture, though he did little or no architectural work himself. Leonardo's drawings include some centrally planned buildings, and he may have helped stimulate Bramante's interest in this form. From 1499 to his death, Bramante lived in Rome, and his work there marks the High Renaissance style in architecture.

In Rome Bramante studied classical remains, and this study was decisive for his work in those years. The Pantheon, which had long been a Christian church, was the source of most circular churches during the sixteenth century, including Bramante's Tempietto. This tiny masterpiece was built for Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain on the spot where St. Peter was supposed to have been put to death. The Doric columns and the frieze of the church are adapted from ancient models.

Bramante was one of the great artists patronized by Pope Julius II. When the pope decided to tear down the Old St. Peter's church and build a new one on the site, he appointed Bramante chief architect.

Bramante's design called for a centrally planned church, but under later architects this design was abandoned. Michelangelo, no lover of Bramante personally, called Bramante's plan for St. Peter's the best one. Something of what Bramante planned for St. Peter's may be seen in the setting of Raphael's School of Athens. The two artists, both from Urbino, were friends, and it is believed that Bramante may have advised Raphael on the architecture in his paintings. Raphael himself did some architectural work.

The last great architect of the Renaissance was Palladio (Andrea di Pietro, 1508-80). Though Padua was his birthplace, his name is chiefly associated with Vicenza, where he lived and worked for many years. As a young man he became acquainted with the ideas of Vitruvius and studied in Rome. The study of classical architecture and its principles affected his work deeply and permanently. He wrote a number of books, including two popular and famous guidebooks to Rome, an edition of Caesar's Commentaries, and an architectural treatise, Four Books on Architecture (1570). In this last work he showed his reverence for the remains of antiquity, which for him bore witness to the greatness and virtue of the Romans. For Palladio, the practice of architecture was a moral act, a manifestation of virtue.

San Giorgio Maggiore Palladio

When an edition of Vitruvius appeared in 1556, Palladio supplied the illustrations. He shared with the editor, Daniele Barbaro, the idea that the dignity of architecture lay in its mathematical basis. He believed that, since the architect symbolized his mental conception in his material, architecture came closest among the arts to the Platonic ideal.

Palladio's application of these principles can be found in the numerous villas he designed. He believed that there were fixed rules from which one must never depart; variety was permissible, but only within these rules. He interpreted these to include a symmetry from which his villas never varied. All of them have a central hall, with rooms on either side that correspond exactly with each other. For the faades of his villas, Palladio adopted the classical temple front, with columns supporting a triangular pediment, as in his Villa Rotonda (Villa Capra) just outside Vicenza. The classical influence was always present in his work, both in secular and in religious buildings. Some of his most distinctive creations are his church faades in Venice. These facades are based on the Greek temple front. A great temple front is used for the main entrance to the church, while at the sides are what appear to be the outer edges of a smaller temple front, placed behind the main entrance. The church of San Giorgio Maggiore is an example. This scheme solved the problems on which earlier architects had been

working applying classical forms to the facades of Christian churches. The classical temple front had been designed for a building with one uniform interior space, whereas Christian churches had long been built as basilicas that is, they contained a high nave flanked by lower aisles. Palladio's solution, based on classical models the Pantheon in Rome had two superimposed pediments was copied for other churches for two and a half centuries. Palladio adhered to the rules of mathematical harmony, based on the proportions of the human body and at the same time on the harmonies of music.

Thus his work was designed to bring together the nature of man and of the universe; at the same time it combined classical and Christian elements in a symmetrical plan. Thus he was working out that synthesis of knowledge and tradition, that harmonious expression of the nature of all being, which other artists and scholars were trying, in their various ways, to bring to expression.

MICHELANGELO

michelangelo Buonarroti (1475 1564) always insisted that he was primarily a sculptor, but he was also one of the greatest painters and architects of his time, and he wrote poems of enduring importance. Though some of his work belongs to the High Renaissance, in the course of his long career he developed beyond that style and became one of the chief sources of Mannerism and Baroque. His impact on other artists

was tremendous and, like that of Leonardo, not wholly fortunate, since lesser men could reproduce only the outward and superficial qualities of his work but not the dynamic energy that informs it. This led to exaggeration and distortion.

He was not a happy man. His outlook tended to be gloomy, and his difficult experiences made it more so. He was a fervent republican and patriot, and the loss of Italian liberty to tyrants and foreigners was a bitter blow for him. He did not suffer fools gladly, and he could be rude and unfriendly. But when he did become attached to anyone, the attachment was deep and passionate. One woman meant a great deal to him: Vittoria Colonna, a cultured aristocrat who was a friend of artists, intellectuals, and religious reformers. Their relationship was one of noble and exalted friendship. He was also deeply attached to a young nobleman, Tommaso Cavalieri. Michelangelo's genius was recognized and rewarded, but he chose to live in mean surroundings and to complain about it. He saw himself beset on all sides by enemies, among whom he included Raphael and Bramante. Among his causes for bitterness was that he worked for a series of popes, each of whom had his own ideas and often interfered with his work. His religious feeling was deep and genuine and shows through his art and poetry. As chief architect of St. Peter's he would take no money, contributing his work for the love of God. He was also a sincere believer in the Neoplatonic doctrines popular at the time, and his work is full of the struggle of the

spirit to free itself from the flesh and of the yearning for a spiritual world of peace and purity above the senses.

Michelangelo was a Florentine, and spent most of his life in Florence and Rome. After 1534 he lived continuously in Rome. The Medici tried to lure him back to Florence, but he always refused, probably because as a lover of Florentine republicanism, he would not submit to living under the tyranny that had destroyed his city's liberty. He achieved greatness and recognition early. His Pietà, now in St. Peter's, was completed in 1501, when he was still in his twenties, and raised him to the front rank of the artists of his time. It shows that he had attained complete mastery of his medium, and it combines this mastery with profound feeling and exquisite grace. His great David, which followed soon after, was commissioned by the government of Florence and embodies the ideals of republicanism.

Among the commissions he received from Julius II was the pope's tomb, planned on a very large scale. Because of all sorts of distractions, the work dragged on for years and when completed was much smaller than originally planned. Its chief statue was that of Moses, which in its imposing presence and force is a fitting memorial of the pope whom it commemorates. For the Medici popes Leo X and Clement VII, he designed a chapel in the Medici parish church of San Lorenzo in Florence to contain the tombs of members

of the family. Here are to be found some of his greatest creations. The figures of Day and Night, Dawn and Twilight show his feeling of the weariness and torment of human life. When he left Florence for the last time in 1534, he had not finished the chapel according to his plans.

In the field of painting, Michelangelo's most elaborate commission was the decoration of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, which he did for Julius II in the years 1508-12. Finding that his assistants were not satisfactory to him, he did most of the work himself. This involved a total of about ten thousand square feet, which he had to work on under conditions of great discomfort, painting while lying on his back. The plan of the work is Michelangelo's. He persuaded the pope to adopt it instead of Julius's own plan, which called simply for paintings of the twelve Apostles. Michelangelo's design is based on the Old Testament, with the main panels presenting scenes from the book of Genesis, such as the Creation of Adam. The figure of Adam, with its latent power awaiting the touch of the Almighty's finger, illustrates Michelangelo's preference for the nude male as the vehicle for the expression of his artistic purposes and convictions.

In other places on the ceiling, the artist has painted panels representing the miraculous salvations of Israel, the prophets, the sibyls, and the ancestors of Christ. The sibyls were prophetesses from pagan antiquity who were supposed to have predicted the

coming of Christ. In this way, Michelangelo has synthesized the Hebrew and Christian traditions and that of classical antiquity. He has also painted several medallions with Old Testament scenes and a number of nude youths. Years later he painted on the Sistine Chapel altar wall his powerful and somber Last Judgment, which opened to public view on Christmas Day 1541. This work in its grandiose scale, its manipulation of large masses, its agitated atmosphere, and its deliberate striving for emotional effect helped inaugurate the Mannerist and Baroque styles.

Michelangelo was also an architect, the greatest of his time. In this field he broke away from the High Renaissance and helped to establish the Mannerist style. This meant departures from mathematical symmetry, surprises, tension, and a feeling of uneasiness and imbalance, all deliberately produced. If we look at the figures of Day and Night, Dawn and Twilight in the Medici Chapel, we see an example of this in the fact that they are resting on sarcophagi that are too small for them, conveying a feeling of crowding and discomfort.

In the vestibule to the Laurentian Library in Florence, which Michelangelo designed, are other Mannerist characteristics. One is the sense of movement produced by the stairway. Another is that the columns are supported by the walls, instead of supporting them; this is the sort of surprise Michelangelo and Mannerist architects liked to introduce. It has been

suggested that the columns are imprisoned in the walls and are struggling to free themselves, the same sort of struggle that appears often in Michelangelo's work.

The greatest architectural work on which he was employed was the construction of the church of St. Peter's in Rome, of which Paul III made him chief architect in 1546. He was neither the first nor the last to be in charge of this work, and the church as it was eventually completed represents his wishes only in part. The great dome, which is usually attributed to him, was somewhat modified after his death before it was actually constructed, but it is the most conspicuous witness to his activity on the building. The dome in its completed form is more pointed than he had planned. Michelangelo was also a poet, and the thoughts expressed in his poems help to illuminate his character and his art. In keeping with his synthesis of Christianity and Neoplatonism, they show him turning from earthly to divine beauty. The eye, the noblest of the senses, can catch reflections of this beauty when it sees through the eyes of another into the soul. To Tommaso Cavalieri he wrote: "My Lord, in your fair face I see all things / That in this life I hardly can relate. / So many a time to God's abode it brings / My soul with all its body's harmful weight." In this way, souls are bound together and in one another have experience of the divine. They rise above the transient and the temporary to the eternal. Sensual love, the opposite of this true love, is vile and should be

shunned.

For Michelangelo, God is especially revealed in the human form. He loved the body, as he said, solely because it mirrored God: "Through mortal beauty, thus, I can behold / And know my God; and I am free to love / Whatever so superbly mirrors Him."

As he grew older, he became more deeply religious. He thought of art more from the standpoint of its religious value, and felt that the artist should be a person of holy life. At the end he even expressed regret for his long attachment to art and turned wholly to God's mercy.

**O now I know how foolish and how stark
My art has been, so far from its true source,
And how I made an idol and a monarch
Of something that, alas, gives but remorse.**

.....

**Painting no more, nor sculpture, can now
quiet
My soul, turned to that Love divine that, here.
To take us, opened its arms on a cross and
bled.**



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CHAPTER 8

THE MEANING OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE: INTERPRETATION AND SYNTHESIS

The Renaissance is unique among the periods of European history in that its nature, its importance, and even its very existence have been sources of doubt and of debate among students. The whole question as it had developed from the fifteenth century to the 1940s has been set forth in a book by Wallace K. Ferguson, and has been dealt with by other writers; but the discussion still goes on, and each serious student of the period has to come to terms with the question.

As we have seen, the idea of a rebirth or a revival of art and of letters goes back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Writers, scholars, and artists thought that they were witnessing a renewal of much that had long been dead or dormant. Over the centuries the notion took root and expanded, until eventually the word Renaissance came to be used, as it still is, to designate an entire historical epoch. The use of this one term to refer to an age indicates the belief that all the diverse phenomena of that age intellectual, artistic, religious, even economic and political had enough traits in common to be included under one heading.

The most influential formulation of this point of view was given in 1860 by the great Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt, in his book *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, which remains the most significant book ever written on the subject. For Burckhardt, Renaissance Italy did represent a distinctive epoch in the history of civilization though it is a gross misconception to claim, as has been done, that he was unaware of the importance of the Middle Ages. For him, the Italian of the Renaissance was "the first-born among the sons of modern Europe," different from those who had lived before him. His character had been formed not solely by the influence of the classics, but by the combination of "the revival of antiquity" and "the genius of the Italian people."

This new man was above all an individual, according to Burckhardt, no longer, as in the Middle Ages, identified by his membership in some corporate group. One section of Burckhardt's book is entitled "The Development of the Individual." One of the forces tending to a development of individuality was found in the political conditions of Renaissance Italy, and to these conditions Burckhardt devoted the first section of his book, "The State as a Work of Art." By this expression he meant to convey the idea that politics in Renaissance Italy was governed by rational calculation, the conscious adaptation of means to ends. He also found in the Renaissance a heightened interest in the world of nature and of man, including both the outer and inner aspects of human character.

Using an expression of the French historian Michelet, he entitled one section of his book, "The Discovery of the World and of Man." Burckhardt's conception of the Italian Renaissance had, and still has, enormous influence. The English writer John Addington Symonds reached similar conclusions independently of Burckhardt. In his multivolume work, *Renaissance in Italy*, he examined in detail many aspects of the period politics, art, literature, religion. For him, as for many others, the history of the modern world was a history of freedom, and the first step in the attainment of this freedom was the Renaissance. He conceived of it as a sudden leap forward from what he conceived of as the darkness and bondage of the Middle Ages, rather than a natural growth from medieval foundations. This view, though less sophisticated than Burckhardt's in its naiveté and romanticism, helped to impart to the Renaissance, now viewed as an epoch in European history, a special glamour that contrasted to the dismal gloom associated with the Middle Ages. This view never had the field to itself, however. The Romantic movement had endowed the Middle Ages with its own kind of appeal, as the writings of Walter Scott and Thomas Carlyle illustrate. The Gothic Revival had left England with some striking nineteenth-century imitations of medieval architecture, including the Houses of Parliament. The great wave of nationalism that Napoleon's conquests helped to arouse had stimulated study of the medieval past of the European nations; the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* is a good example. Burckhardt himself, as a

young man, was capable of tears when he visited the great Gothic cathedral of Cologne.

Consequently, a number of scholars suggested modifications to Burckhardt's picture. He had paid no attention to economic developments, perhaps because of his well-known disgust for the industrialism of the nineteenth century in which he lived; others emphasized the economic background of the Renaissance. Indeed, under the pervasive influence of the economic interpretation of history, some students have come to regard the economic conditions as the most important factor in Renaissance civilization.

Another field which Burckhardt neglected because, by his own admission, he did not feel competent to deal with it is the history of science. This subject has received increasing attention in recent years inevitably, no doubt, in a civilization profoundly affected by both the scientific and the historical outlook and thus a great deal of work has been done on the history of Renaissance science and the place of the Renaissance in the development of science. The term "the scientific revolution" has come into common use to designate the great developments that began with the work of Copernicus and others in the sixteenth century.

Above all, the supposed contrast between medieval darkness and the sudden emergence of the dawn of the Renaissance an idea that is itself a legacy of the Renaissance has proved untenable. Much attention

has been devoted to the civilization of the Middle Ages, and the tremendous achievements of the period are now appreciated at their full value. It is clearly seen that in the Middle Ages great creative energies were at work and the foundations of modern European civilization were laid. Out of this background arose what we call Renaissance culture, not as a sudden change but, in most respects at least, as a natural evolution. Some medievalists have gone so far as to deny that there was anything that could be called a Renaissance. Others, more moderate in their views, found earlier movements to which they applied the term Renaissance. Among these medieval movements, they discovered the Carolingian Renaissance centering on the figure of Charlemagne, and the Renaissance of the Twelfth Century. At the same time, it was found that not everything that happened during the period of the Renaissance was the harbinger of a new age. The Dutch historian Huizinga in his work called in the English translation *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, examines France and the Low Countries in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and finds there numerous evidences, not of a civilization in process of birth, but of a civilization coming to an end. In fact, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries have come to be seen as the end of the medieval civilization, a period, in many respects, of upheaval and breakdown.

Much attention was also devoted to the Renaissance outside Italy. There was nothing really new about this.

The invention of printing and the fame of Reuchlin had caused Germans in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to claim proudly that learning had crossed the Alps. Rabelais in sixteenth-century France heralded the dawn of a new light, and the expression *la renaissance des lettres* (the rebirth of letters) was used in France from about the same time. Burckhardt himself did not pay attention to the Renaissance outside Italy; in fact, in a letter he wrote to his friend Paul Heyse, he dealt rather scornfully with the idea of a Renaissance in France. However, the Renaissance is now regarded as a European movement, in which Italian influences were combined with native traditions to produce a distinctive mix in each country. Much of the remainder of this book will deal with the Renaissance outside Italy. But this broadening of the concept has produced another set of problems. One of them is chronological: Since the Renaissance arrived at different times in different places, when can it be said to have begun and ended? In England, Milton is now regarded as a Renaissance figure, and this would continue the period well into the second half of the seventeenth century.

If the scientific revolution is considered part of the Renaissance, and if Newton's *Principia*, published in 1687, is a culminating point in it, this would reinforce the idea that the Renaissance, at least in some places, continued until nearly the beginning of the eighteenth century. But in this case it would seem to include many developments that depart drastically from the

"spirit of the Renaissance," as usually conceived. For example, such a chronological scheme places in the Renaissance period Luther, Calvin, and a host of other leaders of the Protestant Revolt together with their thousands of followers. It also places the umbrella of the Renaissance over the Catholic Reformation or Counter Reformation. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, both of these movements were inspired by a deep religious zeal and a concern for the state of the church, which were far from the secularism that is often identified with the Renaissance.

This leads to a consideration of the question, long discussed, of the "paganism" of the Renaissance and of humanism. The view that the leading figures of the Renaissance and many of the leading representatives of humanism were pagans and that they abandoned Christian faith is no longer tenable. One of the pieces of evidence presented for this conclusion is the use by the humanists of expressions from classical antiquity to identify Christian doctrines.

It does indeed appear strange to us to find God referred to as Jupiter, but this usage can more properly be described as silly rather than as blasphemous. Such usages are really no more than literary conventions or fads, part of the fashionable jargon accepted in humanistic circles. In some cases, they were imposed by a reluctance to use any word not sanctioned by classical precedent; this meant an attempt to adapt a pagan language to uses for which it

was not fitted.

In the rejection of the pagan view of the Renaissance, it has been suggested that humanism was a Christian movement. The argument has even been put forward that it was a Christian reaction against a wave of scientific naturalism and secularism that had come into Europe during the Middle Ages. This last position was taken by Giuseppe Toffanin, who distinguished between humanism and the Renaissance: The latter he found to proceed from the same currents against which humanism reacted. A more balanced and more convincing view is that the humanists were conforming Christians and that they were not irreligious, let alone pagan; they were simply dealing with other subjects, and, therefore, religion did not play the chief role in their writings. This point of view, which has been set forth by Professor Kristeller, does not exclude the likelihood that for many of them their religion did not always go very deep. But this has undoubtedly been true for a good many people at all times, so it has no particular significance. It must also be remembered that there were, among the leaders of the Renaissance and of humanism, many sincerely and even devoutly religious men. Petrarch and Michelangelo are two notable examples of this. So the Italian Renaissance is not to be looked on as a revolt against religion. Even less is this true in the northern Renaissance, as will be shown later.

A misconception that has helped give some life to this

myth is that to glorify man is to turn away from God, as if the only way to glorify God is to debase His creatures. Some distinguished modern theologians have found in the Renaissance the beginning of a fatal separation of God and man, which in its ultimate consequences is held responsible even for such horrors as fascism. This too seems an extreme view. The Renaissance glorification of man did not need to detract from the glory of God.

This glorification of man seems undeniable. The noble beings that look out at us from the paintings of Raphael and Piero della Francesca, the statues of Donatello, Verrocchio, and Michelangelo, and the works of numerous other artists bear witness to this. The writings of poets and humanists add further evidence. Much of this is summed up in the proud words of Leon Battista Alberti, "...men can do anything with themselves if they will."

Burckhardt's contrast between the corporate consciousness of the Middle Ages and the individualism of the Renaissance is, of course, overdrawn; nevertheless, individualism is characteristic of the Renaissance outlook. The awareness of the uniqueness of each individual personality produced the numerous portraits of the period, which in many cases help us feel that we have gained real insight into the character of the subjects. What student of the Renaissance can forget Federigo da Montefeltro, after seeing him in the portrait by Piero

della Francesca or in the other representations of him that still exist? (see page 61) Certainly there was some element in the atmosphere that was propitious to the development and unfolding of the human faculties. It takes no special knowledge of the period to call to mind any number of men distinguished by their accomplishments in more than one field of activity. Michelangelo has been discussed in the previous chapter. We think also of Giotto and Raphael, who were both painters and architects; Piero della Francesca, painter and mathematician; Machiavelli, historian, political analyst, and writer of plays and stories; and so on. Castiglione's Courtier envisages an individual who is accomplished in many fields; an ideal of all-around accomplishment was clearly not regarded as impractical or unrealistic.

From all this comes the concept of the universal man, dedicated to the fullest expression of all his faculties. Two such men stand out especially: Leon Battista Alberti and Leonardo da Vinci.

Leon Battista Alberti (1404-72) was a member of a distinguished Florentine family that had been caught up in the city's internal political conflicts, with exile as the consequence. Therefore, he did not see Florence until after 1428; yet he always looked on it as the ideal city. He exemplified the same sort of civic humanism that characterized Leonardo Bruni, believing that man was bound to serve the commonwealth. These ideas he expressed in his book *Della famiglia* (On the

Family). This book was written in Italian, although Alberti could and did write also in Latin. One of his aims was to further the use of the vernacular language, and to this end he established competitions for poets writing in Italian, with prizes for the winners. He was also well acquainted with the humanistic learning of the day, an eager student of the classics. He was, moreover, a man of great physical strength and athletic prowess. He loved nature and he loved the beautiful in human beings. As we have had occasion to observe, he was a distinguished architect with a great influence on other architects, and he was a writer on artistic theory, the first great art theorist of modern times. His book on painting recorded the artistic revolution of early fifteenth-century Florence, and served as a textbook for painters eager to appropriate the gains of the Florentines. He wrote a little essay on sculpture, and an elaborate and influential treatise on architecture.

But the most famous of the universal geniuses of the Renaissance was Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519). As we have seen, his work in painting, though relatively slight in bulk, was epoch-making in its importance. He also had a great influence on sculpture and architecture through his plans and drawings, though none of his work survives. But art claimed only a part of his activity and energies. He had a boundless curiosity about nature and sought to penetrate its innermost workings. A survey of his numerous extant drawings shows him to have been interested in what

we would call botany, physiology, geology, and zoology. The influence of his anatomical drawings gives him a claim to be regarded as the founder of the modern study of anatomy.

In addition to his drawings, he kept voluminous notebooks. These were not discovered and studied until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, so they cannot be said to have helped guide the course of scientific discovery, but they helped to further disclose the range of his interests. They reveal the great importance he attached to mathematics. "Let no man who is not a mathematician read the elements of my work."⁶ He dealt with various branches of physics and was deeply interested in the subject of flight. The behavior of water what we would call hydraulics received a great deal of attention from him. His geological interests extended to paleontology. Fossil remains and their locations led him to conclude that the earth was very old, in contradiction to the accepted ideas of his time, and in bold disagreement with the thinking of the church.

He was also interested in artistic theory. The so-called Treatise on Painting consists of scattered remarks in the notebooks assembled and published after his death. Leonardo had himself intended to organize his notes into treatises on various subjects, but he never got around to it. In addition to his theoretical studies, he also devised machines for various practical purposes, even though these inventions normally did

not progress beyond the drawings he made of them. The letter he wrote to Ludovico the Moor of Milan, recommending himself to the latter, reveals something of his own conception of his usefulness, at least to the rulers of states. What he stresses most, in listing his capabilities, is his expertise as a military engineer and deviser of weapons. He can build bridges, destroy any fortress, "contrive various and endless means of attack and defence," and so forth. In time of peace, he can construct buildings, "carry out sculpture in marble, bronze or clay, and also I can do in painting whatever can be done, as well as any other, be he who may." At the end of the letter, he commends himself to Ludovico "with all possible humility."⁷

An equally exalted view of man's powers, glory, and dignity may be found in the Neoplatonic philosophy cultivated in Florence by Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, and their circle. The Florentine interest in Plato was stimulated by the presence of Greek scholars in the city for the church council in 1439 (See Chapter 2). Cosimo de' Medici, attracted by these scholars, had set out to further the study of Plato's writings. He chose Marsilio Ficino, the son of his personal physician, to lead this enterprise. Ficino was trained for the task, became head of the Platonic Academy which Cosimo founded and the chief fountainhead of the currents of Neoplatonic thinking which spread far and wide from Florence. He translated and wrote commentaries on the writings of Plato himself and of many of the ancient

Neoplatonists. A friend and collaborator of Ficino's was the brilliant young nobleman Pico della Mirandola. The philosophy of these men, although much affected by Plato and the Neoplatonists, was in fact eclectic. They drew on what they knew of Oriental thought, and were influenced also by the so-called Hermetic writings, associated with the legendary figure of Hermes Trismegistus, an Egyptian sage who was the earliest of all the great wise men and who was supposed to have influenced Moses. Unlike some of the other Renaissance scholars, Ficino and Pico did not scorn the scholastic tradition of the Middle Ages. Above all, they were faithful and devout Christians; Ficino was a priest, and Pico, in his later years, came under the spell of Savonarola. Their humanistic interests, their Christian faith, and their receptivity to all the traditions of knowledge inspired in these men, especially Pico, a rather touching desire to find points of agreement among these traditions. It was especially urgent for them to be able to reconcile the sacred truths of Christianity with pre-Christian thought. Hence, they sought the conception of an underlying truth that had been glimpsed and taught by wise men throughout the ages. This accounts for the attraction of the Cabala, a doctrine based on an esoteric interpretation of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. By means of the proper exegesis, the student could find in the Hebrew words a doctrine that anticipated and coincided with the teachings of Christianity.

Pico della Mirandola was a devotee of the Cabala, a

believer in the unity of knowledge, and an upholder of the dignity of man. In 1486 he proposed to defend at Rome nine hundred philosophical and theological theses. As an introduction to the planned disputation, he wrote an oration, which has come to be known as his Oration on the Dignity of Man. Although the disputation was never held, the Oration remains as a concise statement of some of his leading ideas, including his distinctive interpretation of the time-honored conception of the "Great Chain of Being."

It had been held that man occupies a definite place in the chain, participating in the distinctive qualities of every type of being and thus holding the universe together. Pico, however, places man outside the chain. He represents the Almighty as having created all forms of existence except man and giving each of them a place in the chain. Man He creates last, to be a witness of His nature. But the chain is already full. Man, therefore, is made free to find his own place. He can rise to the greatest heights and be as the angels, or he can descend to the depths like a beast. Thus Pico vindicates man's infinite potential and his freedom. It was also considerations of man's freedom and dignity that led Pico to reject, at least in some respects, the teachings of the astrologers. He refused to believe that man's destiny was controlled by the stars, because this too would have been an encroachment on man's dignity. On the other hand, he did believe in the occult powers of the heavenly bodies, but it was his conviction that man could

control them, not vice versa. Man was capable of being a magus, a wonder-worker who, through knowledge of the forces at work in the universe, could make use of these forces.

Pico's characteristic ideas about man, his nature, and his place in the cosmos are found also in his Heptaplus, an elaborate interpretation of the first twenty- seven verses of the first chapter of Genesis. This passage, which is, of course, an account of the creation, is subjected to a seven-fold exegesis in which Pico attempts to show, by means of allegorical interpretations and the use of numerous traditions, that Moses (whom he regards as the author) has revealed all the basic facts of the nature of the universe. The universe is made up of three levels of being, rising from the material world through the celestial to the supercelestial or intelligible. Man is a fourth world, including and repeating the specific nature of each of the others. As man is made for God, so everything else is made for man. Man is "the bond and union" of the other three worlds. Quoting from the Hermetic writings, Pico says, "A great miracle...is man!" Man, formed in the image and likeness of God, is served and loved by all the creation.

Ficino, the older friend and in some ways the teacher of Pico, had many of the same ideas. Like Pico he was first a Christian and found man's true end to be the immortal bliss of the soul when it reaches salvation. He translated the Hermetic writings into Latin. He had

a mystic doctrine of love as the bond that holds the universe together. His desire to reconcile Christianity with non-Christian traditions, especially the Platonic, is shown in the title of one of his books, the *Theologia Platonica*. In summary, we can say that there runs through the Italian Renaissance a current of thought emphasizing man's beauty, dignity, and infinite possibilities; though it is seen that man's very freedom to cultivate these possibilities can be abused. Man's character, made for perfection and nobility, can sink to depths of misery and degradation. It is also clear that this emphasis on man's glory need not conflict with Christian devoutness and the glory of God.

This brings us to the question of the relationship of the Italian Renaissance to the Middle Ages. This is not so much a problem created by history as a problem created by historians. The term Renaissance is a concept, which has proved reasonably useful in designating a phase of European civilization. The same can be said of the term Middle Ages, and of the words medieval and modern. Such labels are useful to us only when we keep their limitations firmly in mind. They are not real entities, and they are not even completely accurate as designations of the phenomena they represent. In the Renaissance there are both internal contradictions and points of continuity with the Middle Ages.

For instance, the Renaissance and the modern world are characterized by the presence and growth of cities.

Yet the development of towns and their distinctive institutional structure is also a medieval phenomenon. To say that these towns are medieval or modern would be little more than a play on words, without real significance. Similarly, the old argument as to whether Dante belongs to the Middle Ages or to the Renaissance is another meaningless word game.

Yet changes did take place, and it is convenient to sum up these changes by the word Renaissance. Perhaps it would also be safe to say that the rate of change was more rapid than it had been for several centuries. On the other hand, the period we call the Renaissance contained a number of elements normally referred to as "medieval." This is also true of the post-Renaissance era, though not to the same extent.

We also need to devote some attention to the relationship of the Italian Renaissance to the Northern Renaissance. There are several questions involved here. Did Renaissance civilization cross the Alps from Italy, or were the northern movements indigenous, thus independent of Italian influence? Was the Northern Renaissance more religious and more reform-minded than the Italian? Was there, indeed, any essential difference between the two?

All these questions have been answered in different ways. The most balanced answers to them that are now possible would seem to be these. First, there definitely was Italian influence in the north; one of

many proofs is the influence of Petrarch on French and English poetry. At the same time, there were variations from one region to another, caused by the intermingling of local traditions with the Italian. With respect to the religious and moral aspects of the Italian and northern movements, there is no way to measure and compare them, as far as the personal character of individuals is concerned. What can be said is that the northern humanists made religious and moral reform a more central part of their program than the Italians had done. For instance, Erasmus was probably no more serious in his Christianity than Petrarch, but the reform of church and morals played a greater part in his aims and purposes than in those of his great predecessor. Finally, with respect to possible differences between the Italian Renaissance and the corresponding movements in the north, as far as this question has not already been answered: In Italy the preoccupation with aesthetic form, with beauty of style in expression in all media, was probably greater in the north. This is an oversimplification, of course, but it does point to an important difference. The differences, however, were matters of degree, not of kind. Basic continuities and resemblances always remained.

One of the most intriguing questions about the Renaissance though it may never be possible to give a complete answer to it concerns the reasons for the extraordinary efflorescence of creative power that it witnessed. In the city of Florence especially, the period from Dante to Michelangelo was filled with such

a galaxy of talent as no other city except Athens has ever produced in so short a period and so narrow a space. How are we to account for this extraordinary phenomenon? Certainly it is not enough to point to the changing economic and social conditions of the time. The facts of an urban environment and a society dominated by laymen do not explain literary and artistic genius, political and historical insight, or philosophical activity. Like produces like; social and economic conditions produce social and economic effects. The most that might be claimed in this connection is that the evolving society of Renaissance Italy provided a more favorable environment in which creative ability and talent might flourish. Even this modest affirmation must be carefully qualified; it can no longer be asserted confidently that the increased wealth of a capitalistic bourgeois society created a surplus that made possible the patronage of artists and writers. For one of the discoveries of modern scholarship is that much of the period of the Italian Renaissance was a period of economic depression, in which the indices of prosperity and population show a decline from the high point, which had been reached at about the time the Black Death first struck that is, the middle of the fourteenth century. An ingenious attempt has indeed been made to explain patronage of the arts in terms of a declining economy. But whatever the state of the economy, it still cannot provide a complete explanation for the presence of greatness.

We see that the problem is more than Italian, for on the

wider European stage a rich variety of extraordinary individuals left their mark. Perhaps one or two tentative suggestions may be made. For one thing, in spite of examples to the contrary, the suspicion persists that conditions of freedom have something to do with the unfolding of human faculties. Florence in the Renaissance may not have been a completely free society. Indeed, where could such a society be found? but it did possess a republican tradition and a love and appreciation of what freedom meant. Such intangibles are not negligible. It is also worth asking whether the Renaissance faith in man's powers may not have helped to unlock those powers. May it not be true that the tendency to exalt the human capacities was a cause, as well as a result, of the era's achievements? In recent times, experiments with school children have shown that these children respond to the expectations of their teachers. The conclusion may be that men have great stores of unusual ability and talent and that certain conditions can unlock them and help them to develop freely. Possibly Leon Battista Alberti was stating a great truth when he said that "...men can do anything with themselves if they will."



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CHAPTER 9

THE NORTHERN RENAISSANCE AND THE BACKGROUND OF THE REFORMATION

In the two centuries or so preceding the outbreak of the Protestant Revolt, the intellectual and religious life of northern Europe presents a complex mixture of trends and currents. Among the influences at work were the Italian Renaissance, the breakdown of medieval institutions and the rise of national states and a capitalistic economy, theological and philosophical speculation that helped to undermine some of the traditional certainties, and the beginning of the process of exploration and discovery which was to open the whole world to European scrutiny and domination. This chapter will deal with some of the reform endeavors and some of the humanistic activities in the period preceding the Reformation.

THE DEVOTIO MODERNA

It was in the flourishing commercial and industrial towns of the Low Countries that there developed, in the late Middle Ages, the movement known as the Modern Devotion, or *Devotio Moderna*. Its origins are bound up with the career of Gerard Groote (1340-84) of Deventer. The son of a prominent merchant, he lived in a worldly manner until, in 1374, he had a conversion experience, which caused him to adopt an ascetic way of life. From 1379 he became a preacher of repentance, criticizing the clergy so severely that some of them caused him to be officially silenced. He appealed to the pope, who granted him permission to preach, but he died before this permission could reach him. Groote believed in a combination of religion and learning. He wanted people to be able to read the Bible, and began to translate parts of it into the vernacular. He sought and advocated a more personal religious experience based on the imitation of Christ. He was a mystic to whom the visible church mattered less than a close union with God. Love, faith, and humility were all-important, far above outward works. It was the devil who told men that good works would bring salvation and persuaded them to do such works. This foreshadows Luther's teaching of justification by faith and the uselessness of good works for salvation.

From the work of Groote arose two types of communities that spread far and wide. The Brethren of the Common Life were groups composed chiefly of laymen, though it was

considered desirable that each house should contain some members of the clergy. From the original house at Deventer, other houses were established in the Low Countries, Germany, and even Poland. The Brethren devoted themselves to religious exercises, the search for personal perfection, work, and service to others. They have been described as practical mystics; their striving for personal union with God was accompanied by efforts to reform the church through educating young people and instructing the laity in the essentials of the Christian faith. Much of their best work was done through the schools. In some cases they founded schools of their own, and elsewhere they became teachers and headmasters of existing institutions. Some future intellectual and religious leaders were affected by the Brethren of the Common Life, including Erasmus and Luther.

The other type of community that derived from Groote's work was monastic in a more traditional sense. The monasteries founded by his followers were grouped in the Congregation of Windesheim, and the Congregation became a center for monastic reform. The new house was joined by established ones; so that by about 1500, it encompassed ninety-seven monasteries. As part of the *Devotio Moderna* it shared the ideals of the Brethren of the Common Life, with emphasis on a deep and personal religious experience and faith, combined with learning, especially in the fields of Biblical and patristic study. There were also feminine counterparts of the communities already mentioned. Corresponding to the Brethren of the Common Life were the Sisters of the Common Life, and there was also a body of nuns who became the center of a movement of reform.

The most famous literary product of the *Devotio Moderna* is *The Imitation of Christ*. Though its authorship has been much disputed, it seems to embody material coming out of the circle of the first Brethren of the Common Life, and it undoubtedly represents the ideas and ideals of the movement. It advocates the abandonment of one's self with its will, passions, and vices. Outward religious observances are minimized. Learning is a danger. Solitude, contemplation, and the love of God are all-important.

Alongside the *Devotio Moderna*, which was orthodox in its theological views, there was a long tradition of religious radicalism in the Low Countries; the most outstanding characteristic was a willingness to question the accepted doctrine of the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper. Some had gone so far as to reject it entirely, while others had tended to spiritualize it, emphasizing an inward communion rather than an outward ceremony. This spiritualizing tendency profoundly affected Erasmus, in whom also many of the ideas of the *Devotio Moderna* and *The Imitation of Christ* were represented and through whom they reached a wide public.

MYSTICISM

A mystic is a person who seeks the experience of direct union with the Deity, an experience so sublime that it is beyond and above both reason and discourse in other

words, ineffable. It can be found in many religions besides Christianity and in all periods of church history. In western Europe in the late Middle Ages, it reached a great flowering. Though mysticism has always had a place in Christianity, the medieval church was on guard against the dangers inherent in it. One of these dangers was that the mystic, in seeking a direct unmediated experience of the Divine, would neglect the prescribed ecclesiastical channels: the priesthood and the sacraments. Another danger was that the mystic, convinced that God had taken complete possession of him, would indulge in excesses of behavior and then attribute them to the Almighty. Though these fears were not without foundation, most mystics were quite orthodox. In fourteenth-century Germany, the Dominican order became the source of a powerful mystical current. One difference between the mysticism of this period and earlier manifestations of it was the appeal that it now had to the laity.

As the story of the *Devotio Moderna* has shown, there was now a body of laymen in the towns who sought a deeper religious experience than the institutional forms the church was providing. The great mystics of the fourteenth century, though themselves clergymen, made a conscious effort to reach a broader audience, especially through vernacular sermons and writings. The first of the great German mystics was Meister Eckhart (c.1260-1327), a member of a noble family. A Dominican, he held positions of administrative responsibility in the order and was also a teacher and preacher. He preached to nuns and laymen and became the most popular preacher in Germany. A man of learning, he wrote Latin works for scholars, but produced sermons and devotional tracts in German that had a more popular appeal. He was one of the first great masters of German prose. In attempting to express his mystical concept of God, Eckhart had recourse to extreme and paradoxical statements. For example, nothing is so dissimilar as God and His creatures, yet nothing is so similar. To define God or to attribute specific qualities to Him is to limit Him; therefore, Eckhart said, God is nothing and God is darkness.

His most famous doctrine is that of the spark of the soul or that part, according to him, through which the union with God takes place. The inner experience of the soul is what matters for Eckhart; and he internalizes, as it were, basic Christian teachings. It is in the soul that Christ is born, suffers, is crucified, dies, and is buried; it is in the soul that he rises from the dead. Eckhart does not say much about the historical Jesus. During his last years his views got him into trouble, but he died before the final verdict was rendered by a papal bull of 1329. It condemned a number of his propositions as heretical, dangerous, or suspect, but declared that before his death Eckhart had recanted and submitted to the pope.

His influence lived on through his German writings and through his followers Johann Tauler and Heinrich Suso, both Dominicans. Tauler (c.1300-61) came from a rich family of Strasbourg and spent most of his life there. His writings, chiefly sermons, are in German and testify to his unhappiness with the state of contemporary morals, including the morals of monks and nuns. Warned by the condemnation of Eckhart, he watched his language and used a more acceptable terminology than his master. For instance, though he

also said that God must be born in the soul, he was careful to distinguish the soul from God. After his death, his memory lived on; one of his readers was Martin Luther.

Suso (1295-1366) is especially interesting. His early exposure to the ideals and attitudes of chivalry never ceased to affect him. He also had a strongly poetic and lyrical temperament and a love of nature. He was personally acquainted with Eckhart, whom he revered and defended, even though his defense got him into trouble. In addition to his preaching, largely to nuns, his writings were numerous and influential. In them he depicts his journey out of darkness into the ecstasy of union with God, which is beyond words and in which there is no past, present, or future. He preached a state called in German *Gelassenheit*, a state of passiveness and self-renunciation through which alone the greatest spiritual heights can be reached. In summary, mysticism is a significant factor in the background of the Reformation. Its presence attests to the yearning for a more satisfying personal religious experience. Its wide appeal to the layman is an indication of that active lay piety whose demands would have to be met, whether by the old church or in some other way not yet foreseen.

THE INVENTION OF PRINTING

One of the epoch-making events of the fifteenth century was the perfecting of a mechanical method of producing books more rapidly, in larger quantities, and in more uniform copies than had previously been possible. The invention was demanded by the times. Literacy was increasing, and with it there came a growing demand for books, which could not be met by the scribes whose profession was to transcribe books by hand. A cheap material on which to print had already become available when paper, originally imported from the East, began to be produced in Europe as early as the twelfth century. Printing had been invented in China much earlier, but the European discovery of the process may have taken place without knowledge of what had been done by the Chinese. A type of printing that was already known in Europe involved the use of wooden blocks. Block books, made up of sheets which consisted chiefly of pictures with only a small amount of text, had a special appeal to the many who were totally or nearly illiterate.

The beginnings of printing with movable type are obscure, partly because the process was at first a closely guarded trade secret. Very little is actually known about the man who is considered the inventor of the process, Johann Gensfleisch zum Gutenberg, who came from Mainz, worked on his invention in Strasbourg, and returned to Mainz between 1444 and 1448 to set up his press. What Gutenberg developed was a method of casting type which made it possible to produce individual metal letters that could be turned out in unlimited quantities and could be used over and over again in the printing process. He also created a new type of ink, which would adhere to the metal. For a press, he simply adapted the type of winepress that had been familiar in the Rhineland since its introduction by the Romans.

It is impossible to date accurately the first products of Gutenberg's press. He was not a success as a businessman and did not profit from his invention. His press passed to others who operated it successfully, but who were unable to keep the process secret and maintain the monopoly. In fact, knowledge of the new process spread with extraordinary rapidity, carried at first no doubt by workmen who had been trained by Gutenberg and his successors. The earliest printers in most places were Germans, and they turned up all over Europe. Some were itinerants, men in very modest circumstances who moved about in search of opportunity.

The first great product of the press was Gutenberg's forty-two-line Bible, which was completed by 1456, at a time when Gutenberg was probably no longer connected with the enterprise. By about 1460, two other presses had produced Bibles, and the monopoly was effectively destroyed. By 1480, printing had been carried on in over 110 European towns, and in 1500 there were 236 places where presses were in operation. Books printed before 1500 are referred to as incunabula (from the Latin word for cradle), and it has been estimated that there were altogether twenty million copies of such books. Europe at the time had perhaps seventy million people. By the end of the sixteenth century, when Europe may have had a population of about a hundred million, the number of printed books was somewhere in the neighborhood of 140 to 200 million copies. Though the new invention may have helped to stimulate the growth of literacy and increase the size of the reading public, it does not seem to have changed people's reading habits. As before, religious books formed the largest category. The earliest best seller was *The Imitation of Christ*, of which the fifteenth century saw ninety-nine editions in various languages. Erasmus owed much of his influence to the press and was for a while the best-selling author in Europe until supplanted by Luther. Luther's tracts were printed in large quantities and eagerly bought, but his Bible translations had the largest sale. During his lifetime, 430 editions of his Bible or parts of it were printed. Printing was a factor of incalculable importance in the success of the Protestant Reformation. Luther, Calvin, and other leaders were gifted and prolific writers, and the press provided unprecedented facilities for spreading their gospel.

Printing performed great services for learning. It made most unlikely the loss or disappearance of any more classical works and facilitated progress in the establishing of correct texts. Scholars could now more readily become acquainted with another's work and build on it. The first printed edition (*editio princeps*) of a classical author appeared in 1465, and by 1517, the year of Luther's *Ninety-five Theses*, the great bulk of the Latin classics had been printed. By the end of the sixteenth century the same was true of ancient Greek literature.

The greatest of the early printers was Aldo Manuzio (Latinized as Aldus Manutius). About 1490, when he was around forty years old, he set up his press at Venice. His great purpose was to supply Greek texts in accurate form for students. Between 1494 and his

death in 1515, he published something like thirty first-éditions of Greek authors, including Aristotle, Thucydides, Herodotus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

Another great contribution of Aldus was the series of pocket editions of the Latin, Greek, and Italian classics, which he began to bring out in 1501. They became famous, spread widely over Europe, and did much to popularize the classics. For the Latin works he invented a type based on the handwriting used in the papal chancery; this type, known as italic, had a great influence on the development of typography. It was the ancestor of the types that still go by that name.

The chief centers of printing became established in towns that had an economic or political importance, as centers of international trade or as capital cities. In addition to Venice, some of the outstanding ones were Paris, and for a while Lyons, in France; Basel and Zurich in Switzerland; Nuremberg, Augsburg, and Strasbourg in Germany and the empire; and Antwerp in the Low Countries. In Spain, printing came first to Valencia, but later Madrid and Alcalá became more important. The first book printed in Lisbon was produced by a Hebrew printer in 1489; a few years later German printers came to Lisbon at the queen's invitation. The first book printed in English came out in Bruges in 1474. It was printed by William Caxton, who in 1476 set up a press in Westminster, the first in England. After his death his press was moved to London, which for a long time was the only important printing center in the country.

Hebrew printing began in Italy, where the most important press to publish Hebrew books was that of the Soncino family. Hebrew books were also published in Spain until the Jews were either converted or expelled in 1492. After that, Portugal became more important in the printing of Hebrew books. Of the rather small number of books known to have been printed in Portugal in the fifteenth century, over half are in Hebrew.

The effects of the invention of printing are, of course, impossible to measure. Suffice it to say that without it all the subsequent history of the world would have been radically, perhaps unrecognizably, different.

NORTHERN HUMANISM

Humanism north of the Alps was heavily indebted to the humanism of Italy, but may be distinguished from it by a greater emphasis on the application of its distinctive knowledge and techniques to social reform. The reform program of northern humanism was a broad one; it aimed at a regeneration of moral and spiritual life, of political and ecclesiastical institutions, and of education. It might be more accurate to say that the reform of education was the key to all the other parts of the humanistic program. The new education would be based on the classics of Greece and Rome and of early Christianity and would aim to make better Christians and more productive members of society. These aims

coincided closely with those of the *Devotio Moderna*, and indeed many of the northern humanists had been educated under the influence of that movement. All this had been anticipated by the Italian humanists. Such differences as existed resulted from differing national character, tradition, and needs. Similarly, northern humanism was not monolithic, and the following discussion will take account of national variations.

GERMAN HUMANISM

German humanism had a strongly nationalistic character. The Germans were understandably stung by the Italian contempt for them as "barbarians," and it was, therefore, a great source of pride to them when the *Germania* of Tacitus was discovered and printed. The first edition appeared in Venice about 1470, and the first German edition in Nuremberg in 1473. It seemed to present the Germans with a picture of their ancestors as strong, unspoiled, upright, and untainted by Roman corruption.

It was still Roman corruption that the German humanists tended to regard as the enemy, but now it was no longer the corruption of imperial Rome but of papal Rome. Ulrich von Hutten, a fiery patriot and humanist, wrote a dialogue, *Arminius*, celebrating the German leader whose troops had administered a great defeat to the Romans in the Teutoburg Forest in A.D. 9. For Hutten, Arminius was a fighter for German freedom, and his descendants ought to follow his example in shaking off the Roman yoke. Arminius became a national hero, whose name was later Germanized to Hermann.

Patriotism was a great stimulus to historical study. Some fragments attributed to a Chaldean historian, actually a fabrication published in 1498, gave the Germans a distinguished ancestry going back to Noah, and made one of Noah's sons, in effect, the first German emperor. This "information," together with Tacitus' *Germania*, became the basis for an elaborate picture of the early history of the Germans. Historians of some of the German cities attributed the founding of these cities to Trojans fleeing the fall of their homeland, as Aeneas had founded Rome. At the same time, there was a serious search for authentic sources of German history. German humanists, in their patriotic fervor, were proud to assert that Charlemagne was a German, not a Frenchman. This discovery soothed their anti-French feeling as well as embellishing their devotion to the Fatherland.

Jacob Wimpheling of Strasbourg, a leader of the Alsatian humanists, made this claim in his *Germania* of 1501, proudly boasting that no Frenchman had ever been head of the Roman Empire. There were some protests against his interpretation of German history, and the resultant controversy was the background of his *Epitome* of 1505, one of the earliest histories of Germany. He praises, among other things German, the great achievements of the cannon and the printing press.

Wimpheling illustrates the character of Alsatian humanism: patriotic, pious, and

conservative. Though he remained an orthodox Catholic until his death in 1528, he was an outspoken critic of the abuses in the church. He wrote on education, hoping to bring about a reform that would discard medieval methods and prepare students to read the classics and the writings of Christian authors. He also wrote a Latin comedy, the first by a German humanist, and a poem on the death of Pope Sixtus IV that was so critical he did not dare publish it. The German humanists, earnest in their endeavors to reach as many of their contemporaries as possible, wrote more often in the vernacular than their Italian predecessors and contemporaries. The more popular character of German humanism is illustrated in the work of Sebastian Brant, another of the Alsatian humanists. Though he was a prolific writer of Latin prose and poetry, he is known chiefly for his German poem, *The Ship of Fools*. First published in Basel in 1494, it became very famous and was translated into Latin and several vernacular languages. It is a specimen of fool-literature, which was a very popular genre in the Middle Ages. In this tradition, men and women are looked upon as being primarily fools; and their vices, sins, and mistakes are regarded as so many types of folly. Brant has a separate section on each of a number of types of fools and folly: greed, following the latest fashions, neglect of the training of children, not following good advice, gluttony, talking too much, adultery, dancing, astrology, and so on and on. Brant was not a precursor of the Reformation, but a devout and conservative Catholic whose prescription for the ills of the day was a revival of traditional institutions and practices and whose religious ideal was that of the Middle Ages. Yet, he was also a lover of the classics.

In the reign of Emperor Frederick III (1440-93) the influence of Italian humanism appeared at the imperial court in the person of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, the future pope Pius II. This brilliant and versatile scholar arrived at the court in 1442 and was employed in the imperial and Austrian chancelleries. Eager to make converts among the Germans to the cause of humanistic letters, he found that the classes on whom he had counted the most were the least receptive to the message. The emperor, unlike some of his predecessors, had no interest in humanistic studies. The princes and nobles, unlike their Italian counterparts, were not men of refined tastes and enlightened patronage. The scholars at the University of Vienna, still absorbed in scholastic concerns, were an object of his ridicule. It was among his own colleagues secretaries, advocates, and the like that he aroused real enthusiasm. Later these men scattered all over Germany, spreading the ideas and outlook that they had gained from him. When he left Germany in 1455, he had sown the seed. His followers, like himself, met with strong opposition; and German humanism, faced with conservative attacks, assumed a polemical tone and became a fighting faith.

Some of the universities became battlegrounds. Here the humanists, who in many cases had recently returned from Italy, offered lectures on the classical authors. These men, called poets and orators, frequently became the focus of controversy. Generally they did not remain long at any one institution, but moved from one university to another. A number of German cities contained important humanistic circles. Strasbourg has already

been mentioned. Another was Nuremberg, where one of the leading promoters of humanism was Willibald Pirckheimer. Far from being a poor wandering scholar or university teacher, he was a wealthy member of the upper class. He spent several years in Italy, where he mastered Greek. Though he was active in public life in Nuremberg, his heart was in his studies. It is not altogether accurate to describe him as part of a humanistic circle, since he was a difficult man who did not always get along well with others and mostly went his own way. He had a broad range of intellectual interests. As a patriot, he was much interested in German history. He was also interested in geography and wrote the first historical geography of Germany, besides translating Ptolemy's Geography into Latin. With the aim of promoting virtuous living, he translated numerous ethical and religious works from Greek into Latin and from Greek and Latin into German. These works included writings by Plato, Aristotle, some of the church fathers, and other Christian writers. Like many German humanists, he was strongly opposed to scholasticism, and spoke harshly of scholastic theologians. He emphasized the importance of the Bible for theological study and welcomed the appearance of Luther, who in 1518 was a guest in his house. The bull excommunicating Luther included an excommunication of Pirckheimer. Though he managed to be received back into the church, his sympathies remained with Luther. However, he was conservative socially and was repelled by the rapidity of the institutional changes brought by the Reformation and the popular disorders to which it gave rise. As time passed, he tended more and more toward the traditional position, but to the very end he died in 1530 he was unable to reach a final decision for or against the Reformation. His attitude toward Luther fluctuated, and he even became involved in controversy with him. He died unhappy with both sides, never having understood the real religious basis of the Reformation.

Some years earlier he had taken the side of Johann Reuchlin in the great controversy that, on the eve of the Reformation, divided German intellectuals into two camps. Reuchlin was the pride and joy of the German humanists; his profession was the law, but he was also devoted to humanistic studies. His greatest claim to distinction was that he had mastered not only Latin and Greek but even Hebrew. His attitude toward the Jews, as expressed in a book he wrote in 1505, was that their sufferings came from their rejection of Christ and that efforts should be made to convert them, using mild and gentle methods. Two years later there began to appear writings by a converted Jew named Johannes Pfefferkorn, which advocated much harsher methods of dealing with his former co-religionists: Usury should be forbidden, Jews must be compelled to hear Christian sermons, and their books must be taken from them. He also advocated driving them out.

As Pfefferkorn's writings continued to appear, they became increasingly hostile to the Jews, and he concentrated on a campaign to force them to give up their books that is, the books that were specifically Jewish and that presumably strengthened their faith. It soon became clear that he was closely allied to the Dominicans of Cologne. The Dominicans claimed the right to censor heresy in Germany. In 1509, Pfefferkorn got from the emperor Maximilian I a mandate ordering the Jews to give up their books. When the archbishop of

Mainz protested, the emperor relented and asked that the opinions of learned men and universities be solicited on the question. Reuchlin, as one of those whose opinions were requested, objected to the harsh measures being taken and repeated his plea for gentle methods of conversion, urging also the appointments of professors of Hebrew in the universities. The matter of the books was dropped, but the issue entered a new phase of wider significance. Reuchlin had attacked Pfefferkorn personally, and the latter answered in kind. Then the Cologne theologians attacked Reuchlin, and the conflict began to involve scholars and universities all over Germany and beyond. The case came before Pope Leo X, who appointed a commission of twenty-two to examine the case. All but one decided in favor of Reuchlin. In 1520 the pope decided against the majority and ordered Reuchlin to pay the costs of the trial, which he apparently never did.

The real significance of this controversy was that it polarized opinion in Germany, ranging conservatives on the side of the Cologne theologians, while humanists, seeing themselves as the bearers of a more enlightened intellectual and religious outlook, rallied to the side of Reuchlin. Many of the latter wrote to Reuchlin to express their support, and in 1514 he published a collection of their letters under the title *Clarorum virorum epistolae* (Letters of Eminent Men).

In the following year there appeared an anonymous volume entitled *Epistolae obscurorum virorum* (Letters of Obscure Men), followed by enlarged editions in 1516 and 1517. The authors were actually two humanists, supporters of Reuchlin, Crotus Rubianus and Ulrich von Hutten. The product of their labors was one of the most famous satires in European literature. The "letters" were mostly from fictitious persons with outlandish names, addressed to a real person, Ortwin Gratius, one of the Cologne theologians. In admiring tones and excruciatingly bad Latin, the obscure men write to Gratius, exposing themselves as ignorant, stupid, bigoted, immoral, backward, and crude, and Gratius and his fellows are made to seem to be the same sort of persons. They are all opposed to classical study and to true Biblical religion. To these louts, religion is a matter of scholastic methods and terminology, verbal quibbles, and meaningless ceremonial practices, and their lives were anything but Christian. In this way the enemies of Reuchlin were made to seem hypocrites and ignoramuses, while his defenders were pictured as the representatives of light and progress.

The Letters of Obscure Men is scurrilous, indecent, unfair, slanderous, and hilarious. Luther did not approve, Erasmus had grave objections, and Reuchlin did not welcome them. Nevertheless, they were popular and effective. The authors had, more clearly than anyone else except Erasmus, drawn the line between the forces that were locked in combat over the culture and religion of Germany. They had made it more difficult than ever to avoid taking sides and had helped to prepare the way for the great upheaval of the Reformation. Only a few months after the final complete edition appeared, Luther drew up his Ninety-five Theses.

ENGLISH HUMANISM

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, England appeared to the Italian humanists to be on the outskirts of civilization. Yet, it had a classical tradition of long standing, going back to Anglo-Saxon times. Throughout the Middle Ages, there continued to be some interest in classical study, especially in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In the fourteenth century there was a falling off of interest; in the fifteenth, when humanism was flourishing in Italy, England was troubled by foreign and civil war, which hindered intellectual and scholarly activity. When Poggio, one of the most distinguished Italian humanists, visited England in the years 1418-22 at the invitation of the bishop of Winchester, Henry Beaufort, little interest was shown in him, a sufficient sign of the general English unawareness of intellectual developments in Italy.

The fifteenth century in England was a relatively barren period intellectually, even in the field of scholastic philosophy, where stagnation had set in. Humanism did make some headway, stimulated by Poggio's visit and the presence of papal officials from Italy, but progress was slow. The first important patron of humanism in England was Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, a brother of King Henry V. He employed Italian humanists as secretaries and built up a library of classical and humanistic works and medieval texts; it was the best library in England. He helped the University of Oxford with gifts of money and books and with the endowment of lectureships, and he patronized English scholars. In the fifteenth century, most Englishmen of humanistic tastes made their careers in the service of church or state, some rising to high office. Government documents came to be written in a humanistic Latin style, and the ability to write such a style came to be considered a valuable asset for diplomats. Many Englishmen went to Italy to study; some became interested in humanism, in some cases through contact with the great educators Vittorino da Feltre and Guarino da Verona.

Humanism became firmly established in England only at the end of the fifteenth century, under the leadership of men who were all at one time or another connected with Oxford University and who had traveled in Italy. William Grocyn studied in the Florence of Lorenzo the Magnificent under Poliziano, one of the most distinguished scholars of the day. In Italy he perfected his knowledge of Greek, which he taught at Oxford on his return. In 1496 he moved to London. A discovery made by him illustrates the application of humanistic methods to the study of ancient texts. There was a group of writings that for centuries had been attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, mentioned in the Book of Acts as having been converted by the preaching of St. Paul in Athens. One of these works, *On the Celestial Hierarchy*, had acquired great prestige, and had become the recognized source for information about angels. While lecturing on the book in St. Paul's Cathedral, Grocyn concluded correctly that Dionysius was not its author.

Thomas Linacre, a friend and Oxford colleague of Grocyn, also helped to implant the new

studies firmly in England. He was in Italy from 1485 to 1499 and spent part of this time in Florence; like Grocyn, he studied under Poliziano and learned Greek. At the University of Padua, he took his degree in medicine. Back in England, he moved to London; was tutor to Prince Arthur, heir to the throne; and was later physician to King Henry VIII. He founded the Royal College of Physicians in 1518 and endowed medical lectureships at both Oxford and Cambridge. He translated works of Galen from the Greek and wrote a Latin grammar for Princess Mary, for whom he was tutor. He had an international reputation, and was praised by fellow scholars in many countries, including Erasmus, who was one of his students.

More important than these men was John Colet (1467?-1519), who in 1504 became dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. He had previously been associated with Oxford as student and teacher for twenty-two years. From 1493 to 1496 he studied in Italy and France. His chief interest was theology; when he returned to Oxford in 1496, he began lecturing on St. Paul's letters, though he was not yet a priest and was only a candidate for a theological degree. Furthermore, the normal subject for theological lectures was the Sentences of Peter Lombard, the standard textbook in the field. By lecturing on the Bible instead, Colet was thus breaking new ground and aligning himself with the new learning. By his method of interpreting the Biblical texts, moreover, he broke with tradition perhaps even more radically. For centuries the interpretation of the Scriptures had been chiefly figurative; of the four standard methods of exegesis, only one was literal or historical. When Colet began his lectures, he adhered to the old method, but while he was lecturing on the Epistle to the Romans a revolutionary change took place. Thereafter he approached the text from a grammatical and historical standpoint. He gave attention to the circumstances in which the Apostle had written and sought to discover the simple, direct meaning of the words, avoiding figurative and allegorical interpretations. His chief purpose was practical, to point out the moral lessons in Paul's writings as a means for the improvement of his hearers. It is possible that he owed his new approach, at least to some extent, to contact in Italy with the grammatical and philological methods of Lorenzo Valla.

Colet was primarily a reformer. In his sermons he roundly criticized the clergy for worldliness, pride, greed, and avarice. His distaste for some of the common religious practices of the day may be seen in Erasmus's colloquy, *A Pilgrimage for Religion's Sake*, in which Gratian Pullus, who is described as being disgusted with the relics paraded at the shrine of Thomas Becket at Canterbury, represents Colet himself.

Colet was also an educational reformer. In 1510, he founded, or revived, St. Paul's School in London. Unlike most previous schools, this one was entrusted not to the clergy but to one of the great London guilds, the Mercers' Company. Its first headmaster was not a priest, but a married layman and a humanist, William Lily. In planning the curriculum, Colet called on the help of humanist friends, including Erasmus. Erasmus prepared some of the textbooks as well as a manual for teachers. In the statutes he prepared for the school, Colet indicated that the boys should learn Latin and Greek from "good authors"

and that they should write and speak the pure Latin used by the great classical writers and the church fathers. Scholasticism he scorned and excluded. Together with sound learning, the boys were to be trained in religion; thus the aims of the school were closely allied to those of Vittorino and Guarino and expressed the program of the northern humanists.

Colet did not write or publish much; he owes his place in intellectual and religious history largely to his influence on others. Among those who came under his influence, one of the greatest was Thomas More. More was born in London in 1478. Though his profession was



the law, he was also devoted to the study of the classics and was a friend of Grocyn, Linacre, Colet, and Erasmus. Above all, he was a devout Christian, who at one time even considered becoming a monk. He was elected to the House of Commons as early as 1504. In addition to all this, he was writing from an early age both in Latin and in English. His writings show his keen wit, his interest in public affairs, and his awareness of the need for reform in the church. They also make it clear that he regarded King Henry VII as unjust and tyrannical. As a young man he collaborated with William Lily and Erasmus in translating some Greek works into Latin.

During the reign of Henry VIII, More advanced rapidly in public service. From 1510 to 1519 he held the important legal post of undersheriff of London. During this time probably between 1514 and 1518 he wrote, in both Latin and English, his *History of King Richard III*. It was an attack on tyranny, and helped to give Richard III the sinister reputation that he has borne through the centuries and which some recent authors have undertaken to revise. The book shows More to have been a humanistic historian. It shows the effects of his wide reading among the classical historians of both Greece and Rome. It has been said that this book initiated modern English historical writing, and it became a model for other historians. In 1516 More published his *Utopia*, one of the greatest products of English humanism. Its humanistic character is shown in its deep concern for social improvement, its kinship with Plato's *Republic*, and its stress on education as a means to carry out its program. A discussion of it is reserved for Chapter 21 on political thought.

FRENCH HUMANISM

It was once thought that the Renaissance crossed the Alps from Italy to France when Charles VIII's descent into Italy in 1494 began the period of French invasions. Today it is recognized that we must go much further back in time to find the origins of the Renaissance and humanism in France; the Italian invasions at most gave a further stimulus to a process already well under way. In France the continuity of humanism with the medieval tradition is especially clear. Classical writings were frequently copied there from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, so that by 1300 there were many classical manuscripts in French libraries, and fourteenth-century France was a center for the diffusion of classical learning.

The presence of the papacy in Avignon during most of the fourteenth century made that city one of the great European capitals and strengthened its ties with Italy. Avignon had possessed a certain international commercial importance since the twelfth century; it was connected by trade routes to northern Italy, and contained a flourishing Italian colony. The Avignon popes began to build up the papal library, and among its volumes were works by classical authors as well as by Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio.

Petrarch, as we have seen, spent many years in and near Avignon, and gave a great stimulus to classical studies there. However, he only helped to provide an impetus to the existing tradition of study in France; he by no means created it. This is shown by the vigor with which some Frenchmen rejected his claims for Italian leadership. It is also made clear by the enthusiastic welcome he received when he came to Paris in 1360; the presence of a group of admirers, familiar with his work, is clear evidence that the interests he cultivated had already attracted a group of Frenchmen. Even at this time, moreover, French humanism proved its independence by departing from the rhetorical interests of the Italians to pursue its own chief concerns, which were moral, legal, and political. The French king Charles V (1364-80) was an admirer of Petrarch and built up a library of eleven hundred volumes, an enormous one for that time, and one which included many classical writings. He also had French translations made of the classics, continuing an enterprise undertaken by his father, King John II. Other members of the royal family shared these interests.

At the University of Paris, at the end of the fourteenth century, students were exposed to a good deal of classical literature, studied for its practical usefulness by priests, for example, in preaching. The great Jean Gerson, one of the most important figures in the university and in the church, encouraged humanistic study and scorned scholastic logic.

The fifteenth century was a period of transition in French intellectual life. During the first half, the country was undergoing the ordeal of foreign and civil war combined. The French church was in serious need of reform. The University of Paris, which played a vital role in the country's intellectual and religious life, reflected the disorder and turbulence of the times. It was plagued by the efforts of kings and popes to deprive it of its privileges, as well as by a shortage of funds and by severe internal conflicts among its faculties and the "nations" into which it was divided. The number of students declined, instruction broke down, and instances of violence took place. In 1453, a conflict between students and police resulted in the death of a student, and in retaliation the university suspended its regular activities for nine months. Scholasticism was dying, lost in the barren wastes of formal logic detached from the real world. Against all this disorder and sterility, a reaction took place among those who demanded more satisfying intellectual and religious nourishment. In part, this reaction took the form of mysticism and of renewed efforts at church reform, assisted by influences from the *Devotio Moderna* in the Netherlands. Another element in the reaction was humanism. From the middle of the fifteenth century,

it changed its character as the humanists, moved by the gravity of the conditions in which they lived, turned from literary concerns and toward practical reform ideas. At about the same time, Italian influence began to make itself felt at the University of Paris. Early in 1458, an Italian scholar was appointed to teach Greek there.

The real introduction of Italian humanism into the university was the work of Guillaume Fichet, a member of the theological faculty and a holder of important administrative positions in the university. Besides theology, he taught rhetoric, the key subject of the Italian humanists, which he wanted to promote to a place of eminence in the curriculum. He also had some part in the establishment of the first printing press in Paris. The leading spirit in the foundation of the press was Johann Heynlin, who was at the time a member of the Sorbonne, one of the colleges of the University of Paris, of which Fichet was prior. The press began publishing in 1470, and its production was humanistic; it printed works by distinguished Italian humanists, including Lorenzo Valla, and classical writings, as well as Fichet's book on rhetoric.

Fichet's work was continued by like-minded men, who introduced into the curriculum works by Italian humanists and classical texts as well. They also brought a humanistic method into the writing of French history, examining sources critically and showing, like their colleagues in other countries, a nationalistic spirit. Henceforth, there was always at the University of Paris a group of men who eagerly pursued the study of the ancient writers, welcomed Italian humanists and read their works, and regarded the scholastics and their methods as the powers of darkness. They were devout Christians who regarded the cause of humane letters and true Christian piety as inseparable.

Their aims are best displayed in the work of Jacques Lefvre d'étales (1450-1536), who as a student and a teacher at Paris combined an interest in antiquity with a fervent devotion to Christianity. He was especially eager to make available the real thought of Aristotle, whose ideas he was sure had been distorted by the scholastic commentators. He not only taught Aristotle to his classes but also published a large body of the philosopher's works in Latin translation with his own commentary. Like other members of the Paris humanistic circle, he was attracted to the monastic ideal. These men were also interested in mysticism, and Lefèvre published works by many of the great mystics. He had a mystical interpretation of Aristotle, which made it possible for him also to accept the thought of Plato and of the Neoplatonism of Ficino and Pico, both of whom he knew and admired. Like them and many others, he was also fascinated by the occult: He even wrote a book on natural magic, which he did not publish, and brought out editions of the Hermetic writings, which will be discussed in a later chapter.

In addition to all this, he wrote textbooks in a number of fields and had a more extensive knowledge of antiquity than anyone else in France had possessed up to that time. As time went on, he became more and more interested in theology, especially the study of the Bible and the church fathers. In 1509 he published the Psalms in Latin, calling his version

the Quincuplex Psalterium. In parallel columns he placed five versions: Three were by Jerome, one was an ancient version even older than Jerome's, and the fifth was Lefvre's own translation. He was convinced that the study of the Bible must be undertaken with the grammatical and philological tools introduced by the Italian humanists in the study of classical texts. In 1512 he published the letters of St. Paul. In parallel columns appeared two Latin texts; one was the Vulgate, the other Lefvre's own version, based on the Greek. In the commentaries and notes that he added, he aimed at presenting a simple, clear exposition of the text and expounding and clarifying the Apostle's ideas, avoiding the subtleties and complications of scholastic commentators.

The Reuchlin affair had brought a polarization of opinion at the University of Paris. Lefvre and his circle were outspoken on behalf of Reuchlin, whereas the faculty of theology, whose opinion was solicited by the University of Cologne, decided against him. Henceforth, the university was divided into two camps. For the more rigid conservatives, the enemy was to be found following the banner of Lefvre and Erasmus; while these two men, whose outlook was by no means identical, were made more aware of what they had in common by the presence of the common adversary.

With the accession of Francis I, humanism appeared to triumph, because the king proved to have a genuine interest in promoting humanistic studies. He crowned his services to learning by the establishment in 1530 of a college for the teaching of the three ancient languages: Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. In the foundation of this institution, which was eventually to be known as the Collège de France, the king was encouraged by one of the greatest of all French classical scholars, Guillaume Bud (1468-1540).

Bud combined scholarship with public life; like his father, he held offices in the royal service. He was trained in the law, and one of his great accomplishments was the application of the philological method of humanism to the study of Roman law. In 1508 he published his Notes on the Pandects. The Pandects, or digest, constituted that part of the Roman civil law in Justinian's codification that contained opinions of the jurists. Bud's book was epoch-making; applying the methods of textual and historical criticism used by Lorenzo Valla, he attempted to improve the received text, to clarify obscurities, to understand the law in its historical setting, and to study the social changes reflected in it. The methods he brought to bear on his research were of great value in helping to bring to light the real meaning of the Roman law and had a further significance in helping to produce modern critical history. He showed the same sort of hostility toward his predecessors, the medieval commentators on the law, that Lefvre displayed toward the scholastic philosophers and theologians.

Bud had a more profound and exact knowledge of classical antiquity than any other man of his age. His treatise, *De asse* (the as was a Roman unit of coinage), published in Paris in 1515, dealt with ancient coinage and measures of capacity. This was a subject of great importance for understanding antiquity and one that had not previously received

systematic investigation. His *Commentaries on the Greek Language* (1529) secured his reputation as the greatest Greek scholar of his age.

He devoted himself tirelessly to the defense and propagation of humanism, encouraging and assisting men who showed an interest in classical studies. When he heard of two monks who were being harassed by their fellows for their interest in the classics, he wrote to express his sympathy. One of the monks was Rabelais. Bud wrote books defending humanism, including his *De philologia* (*On Philology*) in 1532, which took the form of a dialogue between himself and the king. He was a patriotic Frenchman, whose love of country led him to study French institutional development and medieval history.

Thus the characteristics of French humanism, which had announced themselves when the papal court was at Avignon, were still in evidence in the early sixteenth century. Though influenced profoundly by Italian scholarship, it was a distinct and autonomous development. It always had a moral and religious tone; the humanists were Christians first. They were interested in educational reform and regarded the scholastics as the enemy. Style was subordinate to content; Lefèvre and Bud were anything but elegant stylists. The French humanists were, in a word, reformers religious, educational, and intellectual.

By the time of the Reformation, the dominant influence in French humanism, as in humanism in general, came from a man who had studied in France for many years and who was personally acquainted with many of the humanists there. Although he never returned to Paris after 1511, his writings were eagerly read there, and he had become the leading figure in European culture. It is to this man, Erasmus, who better than anyone else represents the culmination of northern humanism, that we now turn.

ERASMUS

E

These abuses included reliance on mechanical performance of outward religious obligations while the heart was far from Christian humility and love; superstitious reverence for relics of the saints; the pride, pomp, and luxury of some of the clergy, especially those in high office, the unfaithful shepherds who were neglecting their flocks; and the hypocrisy of monks and friars. In the secular arena, he took a very dim view of kings, who in his eyes were more often devourers of their people than guardians. Above all, he hated war and condemned it in some of his most bitter and most eloquent pages. Though his literary output was immense, it all revolved around these ideas, whose directness and simplicity helped increase their effectiveness. This appeal was enhanced by the brilliance of his style. He wrote always in Latin, with unparalleled grace and wit and with a devastating command of satire. A few of his most significant works can be briefly

mentioned here. In 1500 there appeared the first edition of his *Adages*, a collection of proverbial sayings of the ancients. It was enormously popular, and subsequent editions were steadily enlarged. To the proverbs Erasmus attached his commentaries, often quite long. The result was a book that not only gave his contemporaries a good picture of the ideas of the ancients, but that also conveyed Erasmus's own comments on society, government, and the church. One example is his famous antiwar essay, which accompanies the adage *Dulce bellum inexpertis* (War is sweet to those who do not know it).

In 1503 there appeared his *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Handbook of the Christian Soldier), one of the best expressions of his ideal of Christian piety. Here he presents the Christian life as a warfare with the world, in which the weapons are chiefly prayer and knowledge, particularly knowledge of the Scriptures. He prescribes remedies against the vices and inveighs against the false worship of many so-called Christians.

In 1505 Erasmus published Valla's *Notes on the New Testament*. This work, showing discrepancies between the Greek New Testament and the Latin Vulgate, may have inspired Erasmus with the plan of bringing out an edition of the New Testament in Greek. In 1509, at the home of his friend Thomas More in London, he dashed off a little book, *The Praise of Folly*. Written in the form of an oration in which the goddess Folly delivers a eulogy of herself, it satirizes a wide range of human activities, poking gentle fun at the human foibles that enable men and women to live happily with themselves and their fellows and pouring scorn on abuses of the powerful in church and state. It ends with a beautiful passage in praise of the highest folly of all, the folly of true Christians who are possessed with a madness that makes them forget the things of this world in their love of God and of the blessed life with Him. This book has probably been Erasmus's most widely read work. It is the greatest of all specimens of the fool-literature of which Brant's *Ship of Fools* was an earlier example.

When Julius II, the "warrior" pope, died in 1513, there appeared anonymously a little dialogue entitled *Julius exclusus* (Julius excluded from Heaven). In it Julius appears at the heavenly gate, and St. Peter refuses him admittance. Though Erasmus, understandably, never admitted to its authorship, he was widely suspected of it. Since he had never gotten over the sight of Julius entering Bologna in 1506 at the head of a conquering army, it is quite possible that Erasmus wrote this work, which expresses his sentiments about the earthly successor of the Prince of Peace acting more like the Caesar whose name he bore.

From 1514 to 1516 Erasmus lived in Basel, where in collaboration with the great printer Froben he brought out two of his most significant works: the nine-volume edition of the writings of St. Jerome and the first edition of his Greek New Testament. Both of these appeared in 1516. Erasmus's Greek New Testament, which was accompanied by his own Latin translation, was the first to appear in print, though Spanish scholars had already finished an edition, which was not published until later. In some cases, Erasmus's readings

and translations differed from the accepted interpretation and from the Vulgate, and thereby brought down on him the wrath of the old guard. On the other hand, the work was welcomed by all who shared Erasmus's ideal of a purified religion based upon the true sources of the faith, and was a vital part of his program of reform. As a version of the text, however, it left a good deal to be desired, and the Spanish edition was to prove more accurate.

In 1516 Erasmus was given the honorary title of councilor to the young prince Charles, soon to become king of Spain and later Holy Roman emperor. In recognition of this appointment, he wrote *The Education of the Christian Prince* (1516) and *The Complaint of Peace* (1517). In the former work, he admonishes rulers to devote themselves to the welfare of their people and to keep peace with their neighbors. *The Complaint of Peace* is one of his attacks on war, which he regarded as inhuman, unnatural, and especially to be condemned when waged between men who all called themselves Christians.

One of his most popular writings was his *Colloquies*, written over a period of many years. Originally he wrote them as exercises to help in the teaching of Latin to schoolboys, but they developed into a vehicle for Erasmus's comments on contemporary society, the state of the church, and the failings of mankind. As the title indicates, they are in the form of conversations; and Erasmus makes them lively, entertaining, and always pointed. The speakers are sometimes real people, more or less disguised under fictitious names. For students of the period and of Erasmus, they are still one of the most accessible ways of learning what he thought about the issues of the day. By the time the Reformation began, Erasmus was the most influential writer, scholar, and intellectual in Europe, the leader of those who pinned their hopes for reform on education, "good letters," peace, and moral improvement in both church and secular society. In the years after about 1517, their hopes were to be shattered by war among nations and by the violence and fanaticism that accompanied the Protestant Revolt. Erasmus, as we shall see later, came to a realization that Luther's aims and methods were not his own, while Luther ended by scorning the great scholar for whom he at one time expressed great respect. Erasmus was never able to understand the force of the political and religious passions that moved his contemporaries. Neither the power of nationalism nor the depth of a religious experience like that of Luther seems to have found any echo in him. He remained a man of moderation, capable of seeing both sides of the religious conflict without giving himself wholly to either, though he did remain in the old church. Luther accused him of cowardice, and Erasmus himself confessed to a kind of timidity. But to be able, in an age of fanaticism, to remain detached from the opposing parties, may itself be a kind of courage. Certainly it must have been a source of loneliness to Erasmus. He lived in many places without ever finding a truly permanent home, and he died though a Catholic in Basel, a city that had become Protestant.

He was rejected not only by the Protestants but also by a strong party among the Catholics. Much of his work became forbidden reading to Catholics before the century

was over; in Spain, where his influence had been tremendous, his very name ceased to be heard. From a superficial point of view, he might seem to have failed, but this would be most inaccurate. His ideals of reason, tolerance, and humane dealing among men have never lost their appeal to many persons. Even in the short run, it can be seen how enduring his influence was. To study the English Reformation is to see his imprint on the outlook of the new church in numerous ways for example, in the idea of the adiaphora or the nonessential things on which Christians may disagree as long as they hold to the basic points all have in common. Where the idea of the unimportance of ceremonies and theological subtleties was accepted, together with the transcendent importance of love for God and one's neighbor, there we can divine the ideas of Erasmus. Though he did not raise his voice so loudly as many of his contemporaries, it was heard and heeded long after some of the others had become silent and forgotten.



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CHAPTER 10

EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY BEGINNINGS OF THE EXPANSION OF EUROPE

It was the opinion of Lord Acton, a great English historian, that the discovery of the New World was the greatest landmark in the transition from the Middle Ages to modern times. Certainly the movement of western Europeans beyond the narrow limits of their homelands out to both the East and the West, a movement that began in the fifteenth century, had momentous consequences. In time it led to the penetration of European influence, and in some cases European domination to every continent on the globe. "Europe has held sway on all the continents in succession....Europe has produced a civilisation which is being imitated by the whole world, whilst the converse has never happened."8 But the influence did not all move in one direction, and European life and thought were significantly affected by the outside world.

Why was it that the Europeans imposed their presence on the rest of the world to such an amazing degree? This is one of those historical questions whose

fascination is in proportion to our inability to answer any of them, for no definitive answer is possible. The peoples who led the way were neither rich nor numerous, not only by our standards but also by comparison with China, the most powerful, wealthy, and civilized state in the world at the time the great expansion began. The Chinese Empire was a trading empire, regularly sending ships on distant commercial expeditions involving thousands of tons of shipping and thousands of men. The Moslems were, and had long been, engaged in active trade throughout the East. European trade and navigation had, by comparison, been relatively restricted during the Middle Ages.

Though we cannot expect to find the ultimate causes for the European expansion, we can acquaint ourselves with some of the conditions in which it began. In the first place, the movement is associated with a shift in European life from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic seaboard. Leadership in European political and economic life was coming more and more into the hands of Portugal, Spain, France, and England. These nations all had monarchies that were growing in strength, increasing their control over the various classes within the state, and consolidating their hold over the territories subject to them. They all had Atlantic coastlines, and led the way in seeking new trade routes and new lands. The Dutch joined in the race as their political independence grew. These rising states sought a way to counteract the long-

standing Italian particularly Venetian monopoly of the eastern trade.

The economic impulse was no doubt dominant, but the missionary aspect was present too. Vasco da Gama was said to have named "Christians and spices" as the objects of his voyage to India. The desire to convert was linked to the crusading zeal, which lived on in the hearts of many Portuguese and Spanish as a legacy of their long conflicts with the Moors. To combine a profitable acquisition of new trade routes with a telling blow against the infidel was a potent combination in urging brave men on to daring enterprises. Nor was the desire to learn more about the world a negligible factor.

The state of technology was adequate to the task. At the start of the fifteenth century, European ships were inferior to those used by Arab and Chinese traders; but the Europeans learned fast, and within two hundred years they were building the best ships in the world. In 1400, European ships, though sometimes quite large, were clumsy. They usually had only one mast, though some larger ships had two or three. They were square-rigged, which limited their movement, and had only one sail to a mast, which meant large sails, difficult to handle. Thus these ships were difficult to maneuver and unsuited for long journeys or adverse winds.

These square-rigged ships, consequently, were not important in the early voyages of discovery. Instead,

the Portuguese used a type whose construction they borrowed from Arab merchants, the two-master lateen caravel. The lateen sail was more or less triangular and capable of being adjusted to almost all winds. The Portuguese modified the caravel by combining the square-rig with the lateen sails and adding a mast, or sometimes two. As a result, the advantages of both types of ship were gained and the disadvantages eliminated. The Arab caravels could not attain the size or speed possible to square-rigged ships, but were superior for sailing close to the wind and much more easily steered. The new ships made feasible the long-distance voyages to the Far East and the New World.

Some instruments existed for the use of navigators. Compasses had been used by Europeans at least from the thirteenth century. To ascertain their latitude, sailors found the altitude of the heavenly bodies by means of the astrolabe; the quadrant was invented and used in the fifteenth century. There was no satisfactory means of finding longitude or speed.

The geographical picture of the world with which Europeans started their expansion was a fascinating mixture of fact and fantasy, based on the knowledge of the ancients, especially Ptolemy, as supplemented in the Middle Ages, largely by the Arabs. The spherical nature of the earth had been known as far back as the fifth century B.C., and the Hellenistic geographer Eratosthenes (c.276 c.195 B.C.) had measured the circumference of the earth with remarkable accuracy.

The most influential of the ancient writers on geography, Ptolemy, was active in the first half of the second century A.D. Though his work on astronomy, the *Almagest*, was widely used by the Arabs, they neglected his *Geography*, which was not recovered until 1410. Ptolemy's picture of the world contained errors that affected navigation and discovery. He adopted a false estimate of the circumference of the earth, making it about one-sixth too small. He enclosed the Indian Ocean in a continent, which extended from Africa to China, and said that the whole southern hemisphere was too hot for navigation. The Arabs added some ideas of their own, including the belief that the Atlantic, or "Green Sea of Darkness," was unnavigable. This fear, imparted to the European nations, was an obstacle that had to be overcome. In the early Middle Ages, the greatest contributions to an increased knowledge of the world were made by the Vikings, or Norsemen. From around the year 1000 they were active in exploring North America, and their voyages there are recorded until the middle of the fourteenth century. Among Christian travelers in the Middle Ages, the greatest was Marco Polo, a member of the Venetian merchant aristocracy, who spent over twenty years in the East, seventeen of them in the service of Kublai Khan, ruler of the great Mongol Empire in Asia. After Polo's return to Europe in 1295, he wrote a book to describe what he had seen and heard.

Other travelers to the East, both before and after

Marco Polo, some merchants and some missionaries, helped to spread a knowledge of Asia among the European reading public. Therefore, much was known about Asia long before the opening of the modern age of discoveries. From the middle of the thirteenth century to the beginning of the fifteenth, Italians, especially Genoese, were leaders in exploring activities, though they were not alone in the work. Italian and Catalan hydrographers drew the portolani, or coast-charts, which contained accurate outlines of the coasts of the Mediterranean and Black Seas, with some charts extending to northern Europe and the northern part of Africa. Genoese sailors reached the Barbary Coast late in the thirteenth century; an Englishman accidentally discovered the Madeira Islands around 1370; a French expedition reached the Canary Islands in 1402. Christian colonies were established in several places in the Canaries. The great age of exploration and discovery was inaugurated by the Portuguese, and the first important figure in the story is Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), a member of the royal family. In 1419, on the coast at Sagres, he built a palace, established his court, and set up a center for exploration. He gathered around himself sailors, astronomers, shipbuilders, mappers, and makers of instruments, and from here he sent out expeditions. His motives were religious, scientific, and patriotic: to carry on the crusade against Islam and spread the Christian faith, to explore the unknown seas and discover new lands, and to contribute to the greatness of his country.

Among his many accomplishments, Henry is best known for the expeditions he sent from 1420 to explore the coast of Africa. These voyages mark the beginning of continuous ocean sailing. In the process the Portuguese began the slave trade. While Henry was interested in the conversion of the captured African natives to Christianity, others were interested only in the profits to be made from them. With the discovery of gold as well, the continued support of African exploration was assured after Henry's death, when men with less noble motives would have to carry on his work. The last of Henry's voyages (though it actually did not take place until after the prince's death) reached a point somewhere on the coast of what is now Liberia. Though others were to go much farther, it was Henry's work that laid the foundation. He is considered the greatest figure in his country's history, just as the voyages to which he gave the decisive impulse are Portugal's most memorable achievement.

After Henry's death, sponsorship of the voyages was undertaken by the kings. Progress continued to be made toward reaching the southern tip of Africa, which was much farther south than was realized. The sailor who finally reached and rounded the southernmost point of the Continent was Bartolomeu Dias, sent out by King John II in 1487 with two ships. Blown off course by a storm in the neighborhood of Walfisch Bay, Dias reached the coast once more and rounded the tip without realizing it. He sailed eastward

as far as the Great Fish River, five hundred miles beyond the Cape, when his men refused to go farther. He then turned back, and on the return voyage found that he had rounded the southern tip of Africa. When the king learned this, he changed the name of the cape to Cape of Good Hope (Dias had called it the Cape of Storms). In December 1488, after a voyage of over sixteen months, Dias returned to Lisbon.

In the following year, King John sent out Pro da Covilh by land to find out if it was possible to sail around Africa to the East. He established the fact that it was indeed possible, and became the first Portuguese to reach India. Under Manuel the Fortunate, king since the death of John II in 1495, Vasco da Gama took four Portuguese ships to India. With the help of an excellent Muslim pilot whom he picked up on the way, he reached Calicut on the west coast of India in May 1498, having left Lisbon the preceding July. He managed to acquire a rich cargo of spices at Calicut, with which he returned to Lisbon in September 1499. He had been gone over two years and lost a third of his men, but the Portuguese had attained their great objective, a sea route to India. The Portuguese set out to exploit their new route to eastern spices, but they met an obstacle in the Moslem merchants who largely controlled this trade in the East. There followed a bloody conflict between Portuguese and Moslems, in which the Europeans adopted the most ruthless methods to achieve their objectives.

In 1500, another Portuguese sailor, Cabral, was sent out on the first commercial voyage to India. An unplanned result was the discovery of Brazil. One of his captains, becoming separated from the rest of the fleet in a storm, made other discoveries: the island of Madagascar and Somaliland in Africa. Cabral did reach India, and after his voyage the Portuguese began the practice of sending fleets there annually. The founder of Portuguese supremacy in the East was Albuquerque, who arrived there in 1503. He saw that to secure their interests, the Portuguese would need a permanent fleet in the Indian Ocean, with a naval base, fortresses, and a reserve supply of sailors. With the insight of genius, he chose as base locations Goa, Malacca, Ormuz, and Aden, all of which he took except Aden. From Malacca the Portuguese were able to reach China; one of their ships arrived in Canton in 1513. Eventually they were given permission to have a permanent settlement at Macao and engage in the China trade. They also reached the Moluccas, or Spice Islands, where through treaties with native rulers they were to procure spices. From their new bases they were able to sweep the vessels of the Mohammedans from the seas, block the trade routes to Moslem merchants traveling by land, and dominate the spice trade.

Early in their career as explorers, the Portuguese encountered Spanish rivalry. During the fifteenth century there were numerous disputes between Portugal and Castile involving trade and colonization.

A treaty of 1479 granted the Portuguese a monopoly of trade, exploration, and settlement on the West African coast and all the Atlantic islands except the Canaries, which remained Spanish. It was in the West that Spain made important discoveries.

The first of the great discoverers who served the Spanish crown was Christopher Columbus, born in Genoa in 1451. He was a sailor from an early age, acquiring a great deal of maritime experience. He lived for a time in Portugal and later in the Madeira Islands. At some point he began to think seriously of a westward voyage to the Orient. From Toscanelli, a famous geographer, he acquired some wildly inaccurate figures based on Ptolemy on the size of the earth. To compound their misinformation, Columbus and Toscanelli believed that Asia extended far to the east, so that Columbus was finally led to conclude that Japan was about 2,400 nautical miles west of the Canary Islands, whereas the true figure is 10,600, well over four times his estimate.

His attempt to interest the king of Portugal, John II, in sponsoring his venture was a failure; the king turned his proposals over to a commission of experts, who in 1485 rejected them on the perfectly correct basis that Columbus's calculations were unsound. He went to Spain, where years of frustration followed as he endeavored to secure the backing of Queen Isabella. Finally, as he prepared to seek help from Charles VIII of France, Isabella decided to finance his expedition.

She and Ferdinand, her husband, even yielded to Columbus's very extravagant demands for titles and offices over the territories that he should discover, as well as a tenth of all gold, silver, and other wealth that he should obtain there. In August of 1492 he set sail with three vessels. On October 12, land was reached; though Columbus thought it was Japan, or Cipangu, it was San Salvador, or Watling Island, in the Bahamas. Exploring the islands, he found Cuba, which he thought was part of China. On what is now Haiti he found gold, which encouraged his belief that he had reached the Orient. He named the island Hispaniola and decided to found a colony there.

On his return, Columbus was forced by bad winds to land in Portugal. The king, John II, learning of the voyage, laid claim to Columbus's discoveries, and the resultant dispute with the Spanish was settled by papal bulls and treaties between the two nations. In 1493, one of the bulls drew a line of demarcation running from north to south a hundred leagues west of the Azores and gave everything west of that line to Spain, while all that lay to the east was to be Portuguese. At the request of John II, this line was shifted to a point 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands, thus giving Brazil to the Portuguese. This line was embodied in the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494. Columbus made three more expeditions, in 1493-96, 1498-1500, and 1502-04. He made several more discoveries, and reached the coasts of South America and Central America without ever realizing that he was

not in the Orient. His reputation as a great sailor was tarnished by his lack of success as a colonial governor; he was actually sent home in chains from his third voyage. He never received from the king and queen all that they had agreed to give him.

The death of Isabella in 1504 was a blow to his hopes, leaving him at the tender mercies of Ferdinand, a slippery character who could be counted on to do nothing unless he could see his own advantage in it. On the other hand, Columbus was by this time a wealthy man, and it could be argued that some of his demands were exorbitant. What really bothered him most was that he was not treated with the respect that he considered his due; he was a proud and sensitive man. In 1505 he went to court to press his claims. The king might have been willing to be generous if Columbus for his part had been willing to abate his demands. Columbus, however, would not compromise, and in the end received nothing. He was still following the court and hoping for a settlement when he died, obscurely, in 1506. The name America was first used for the new continent in 1507. It was based on the name of Amerigo Vespucci, a Florentine who took part in four voyages to Central and South America between 1497 and 1503 in Spanish and later in Portuguese service, and whose writings, widely read, added much to what was known about the New World.

The Spanish did not at first appreciate their new world

as much as they coveted a share of the eastern spices, which were being exploited by the Portuguese. It was the Spanish hope that if the line of demarcation were extended around the world at a distance of 180 , some of the Spice Islands would be found on the Spanish side. This hope (which was actually false) impelled King Charles I of Spain (Emperor Charles V) to finance an expedition led by Ferdinand Magellan, a native Portuguese now in Spanish service, who had proposed to reach the Spice Islands by sailing westward, thus avoiding any conflict with Portugal.

Magellan set out with five ships in September 1519. He had to face mutiny, shipwreck, and terrible weather the passage through the straits that now bear his name took thirty-eight days before breaking out into the Pacific. Supplies ran out, and the men were at one point eating rats and leather. Eventually landings were made in some of the Pacific Islands. Magellan himself was killed in the Philippines, having gotten involved in some obscure war between natives. Juan Sebastian del Cano, left in command, returned with his one remaining ship to Spain in September 1522 after a three-year voyage. It was the first circumnavigation of the world, and one of the greatest of all voyages. Yet it did not do the Spanish much good; the Portuguese retained their dominance in the East, and in 1529, by the Treaty of Saragossa, Charles sold to Portugal his rights in the Moluccas.

Even before the death of Columbus and to his great

chagrin other Spanish expeditions were exploring the New World. In the first half of the sixteenth century, Spain laid the foundations of her great empire in the West. The isthmus of Central America was conquered by 1520. In 1513, Balboa marched across it and sighted the Pacific, which he called the South Sea. (Actually a Portuguese had entered the previous year, so that Balboa was not its discoverer.) It was Magellan, a few years later, who gave it the name Pacific.

In 1519 Hernán Cortés sailed with about six hundred men from Cuba to begin the conquest of Mexico. Here the Spaniards found themselves confronted by the rich and, in many ways, advanced civilization of the Aztecs. Taking advantage of discontent among subject peoples unhappy with Aztec rule, Cortés with his small band of men was able to conquer an empire with a population of millions. The chief advantages of the Spanish were the extraordinary courage of Cortés and his men and their superior discipline. Although they had firearms, these seem not to have been a major factor, since they made little use of them and relied chiefly on swords, pikes, and crossbows. By 1521 the Spaniards had succeeded in taking the capital, located on the site of what is now Mexico City, and from there Spanish rule spread out in all directions.

Balboa had heard of a great empire to the south, rich in gold, but he had died before being able to investigate it. This must have been the vast empire of

the Incas in Peru, stretching along the Andes from what is now southern Colombia to central Chile, with a population estimated at between six and eight million and, like the Aztecs, a highly developed civilization. It was indeed rich in gold, and in silver as well. This empire was conquered with even fewer men than in Mexico, and the leader was Francisco Pizarro, a disagreeable character of humble origin and no education. He did not succeed in his objective of conquering Peru until his third attempt, after going to Spain and getting the backing of the king, who in 1529 appointed him governor of Peru for life. In 1530 Pizarro, with fewer than two hundred men set out on what was to prove the conquest of Peru. Like Cortes, he found a political situation that he could exploit, a war over succession to the throne. Consequently, Pizarro was able to rise to power and wealth. However, the Spanish, having become dominant, began to fight among themselves, ushering in a period of civil war that lasted for nearly twenty years and cost Pizarro his life. Spain finally restored order. In spite of the tumult, towns were established and the political and economic organization of the conquest took place. Lima was founded in 1535, and its university in 1555, the same year as the University of Mexico. These were the two earliest institutions of higher learning in the New World.

From Peru the process of conquest was carried on in many directions. Most of Chile was conquered, Ecuador was penetrated, and Orellana, a lieutenant of

Pizarro, in 1541 sailed all the way down the great river that he named the Amazon because he thought he saw women warriors along the banks. Colombia was penetrated and explored. Venezuela (Little Venice) was also acquired; for a while Charles leased it to Germans as security for a loan, until the cruelty of the lessees to the natives caused the cancellation of the grant. In 1535 Buenos Aires was founded, in the search for silver (the name Argentina is based on the Latin word for silver), and Asunción in Paraguay in 1537. The chief motive of the Spaniards was the search for gold and silver, and they pushed their quest into North America as well. There were tales of wonders to be found there, like the Fountain of Youth that Juan Ponce de León sought in Florida. In 1539, Hernando de Soto, governor of Cuba, began to explore inland from Florida with six hundred men. They discovered and crossed the Mississippi; De Soto, who died on the trip, was buried in the river. Coronado, with about a thousand Spaniards and Indians, set out in 1540 to look for the Seven Cities of Cibola, and explored parts of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Kansas. Others explored the west coast as far north as Oregon.

By the middle of the sixteenth century, Spanish rule was established throughout Central and South America, and the work of governing a colonial empire was under way. To the soldier and the priest was added an official of the crown. The crown established its sovereignty over the conquered territories in spite of resistance from the conquerors, who would have

preferred in some cases to remain independent rulers. The Indies, it was decided, were to be regarded as kingdoms under the crown of Castile, administered separately from the Spanish kingdoms and with their own council. The natives, or Indians, were to be regarded as free men, directly under the crown. They were subject to Spanish law and Spanish courts, but their own laws were to be respected when not barbarous or in conflict with Spanish law, and they were not to be deprived of their property.

The colonists were granted encomiendas, a system of tributary labor, which did not include legal jurisdiction over the natives or territorial lordship. They had to pay native laborers according to a wage scale fixed by the government, and, while the natives were subject to forced labor, the compulsion was to be supplied by the legal authorities and not by the colonists. The colonists or grantees (encomenderos) had to perform military service and pay the salaries of parish priests. Over each province was a governor appointed by the crown. These governors were watched carefully to make sure that they could not assert any real independence. Usually their terms were short, and they were checked by their advisory councils, or audiencias, which reported on them to Spain and heard appeals from their decisions. Locally, town councils looked after the interests of the colonists. By the second half of the sixteenth century, the members had come to purchase their offices from the crown and hold them for life. They were not truly representative,

but spoke for the local ruling class.

Among the first Spaniards to arrive in the New World were missionaries. Soon churches and monasteries were established, dioceses were set up, and the work of conversion of the natives was undertaken with great vigor, and often with great success. Many natives became devout Christians, even saints; others proved recalcitrant, and some of the priests suffered martyrdom at their hands. But the missionaries met resistance from the colonists, who were determined to exploit the natives for their own benefit. Though the natives were legally free, in practice they were often treated like slaves. There was a terrible decline in the native population. In Cuba, for example, in a twenty-year period the number of natives is estimated to have shrunk from fifty thousand to fourteen thousand; in parts of Mexico, all were wiped out. Had it not been for the church, and the brave priests who spoke out against these abuses, the fate of the Indians would have been even worse. The most famous of these priests was Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566), a Dominican. For many years, Las Casas devoted himself to the attempt to improve the condition of the natives. He preached, persuaded, and wrote, meeting powerful opposition from the vested interests whose wealth and privileges he was attacking. After several trips to Spain, he got the attention of Charles, who issued laws to prevent the injustices that Las Casas had denounced, and made him a bishop. But distances were great, abuses continued, and Las

Casas continued to protest. His record as a humanitarian is marred by his willingness to condone the enslavement of black Africans in order to spare the Indians. In time, the Jesuits entered the missionary field, with important results that are discussed elsewhere in this book.

The Spanish and Portuguese could not permanently keep other nations from challenging their asserted monopoly on exploration and discovery, but the other nations started later and their efforts are beyond the scope of this chapter. It might be worthwhile here to mention one early French explorer, Jacques Cartier, who sailed to the New World with the backing of the king, Francis I. His first voyage started in 1534, and he reached Newfoundland, Labrador, and the Gasp Basin. The following year he returned and sailed up the St. Lawrence River until he found his way blocked by rapids at the site of an Indian town, which he renamed Montreal. In 1541, again with royal backing, he came back to Canada. This time he attempted to found a colony on the site of what became Quebec, but failed. He had laid the foundation for the great work of the French in Canada, but the enterprise did not flourish until the following century.



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CHAPTER 11

ECONOMIC TRENDS AND CONDITIONS IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

It is difficult to generalize about the European economy in the sixteenth century. Conditions varied considerably from one area to another; and, although there were forces that were everywhere at work, their intensity and their impact differed as they affected different regions. Similarly, there were temporal variations; conditions changed with the passage of time, and the timetable varied from one area to another.

Keeping these facts in mind, we may make some general statements. The sixteenth century was on the whole a time of economic expansion for Europe. The depressed conditions that had prevailed from the middle of the fourteenth century were giving way, and the growth before 1350 was being resumed. One sign of this expansion, as well as a cause of it, was a growth in population. By the sixteenth century, the ravages of the Black Death and its recurrences were being made up, and the overall population of Europe had reached its 1350 level and was increasing beyond that point.

The general statement that the sixteenth century was a period of economic expansion needs to be qualified by the recognition that not all areas witnessed the same degree of growth; in some, indeed, the overall picture is one of recession. The economy of Europe was becoming truly European. What happened in one country affected others, and wise businessmen kept abreast not only of economic activities and problems in the various parts of Europe but also of the numerous other factors that might affect their businesses. These factors included the political, diplomatic, and military situations; dynastic arrangements, including such matters as marriages among ruling families; and, as the split in the church became deeper, religious matters.

Other important influences were the voyages of discovery and exploration. Here again the impact was different for different countries. One of the effects of the voyages undertaken by the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French, and Dutch was to hasten the process that had produced them the process, that is, whereby the nations of the Atlantic seaboard took the place of the Italian city-states as the chief factors in European trade and economic life in

general. Until this time, Europe had always centered on the Mediterranean; it was the Mediterranean that was the great axis of trade and civilization, or else the great barrier across which Christendom faced its enemies. Though it did not cease to be important, a profound and apparently irrevocable shift in relationships was taking place, and Europe was beginning to face the Atlantic seaboard. The Italian city-states, by their failure to unite with one another were becoming the battlegrounds and dependencies of the great western nations, particularly Spain; and their economic greatness was passing. The change was gradual; Venice remained a great state, and Genoese merchants and bankers played a significant part in the Spanish economy. But the future lay elsewhere.

From the Spanish Empire in the New World came an influx of precious metals, which had profound economic effects. The flow became especially important in the second half of the sixteenth century, and consisted of both gold and silver, with the latter metal predominating. The Spanish went to great lengths to secure the entire supply for themselves and prevent any of their precious cargoes from falling into the hands of their rivals. Each year the plate fleet, bearing the bullion from the mines of Peru and Mexico, was accompanied to Spain by a convoy of warships, and during the sixteenth century no other nation ever succeeded in intercepting this fleet. Francis Drake was able, however, to rob Spanish treasure in Central America and in the Pacific.

In the middle of the sixteenth century great deposits of silver were discovered in Mexico and Peru; in the latter region were the great mines of Potosí, in the area of modern Bolivia. A new method of extracting the silver from the ore was developed, and the amount of silver reaching Spain became very great. It was this bullion, which to a great extent, made possible the foreign and imperial policies of the last years of Charles V and the reign of Philip II. Because of these ambitious and costly policies, it proved impossible to keep the gold and silver in Spain. Much of it was spent to support activities that were not directly related to Spanish affairs, since both Charles and Philip had extensive interests outside the country. It was also necessary to export the precious metals to pay for manufactured goods, because of the neglect of Spanish industry. Spain also was compelled to import agricultural products throughout the century. Various causes combined to harm Spanish agriculture.

The mistreatment of the Moriscos (See Chapter 18), who had been the chief agricultural workers in the country, was a serious blow. Another harmful influence was the favor shown to the mesta, the association of sheep-growers of Castile. Since the mesta was a prolific source of tax revenues, the Spanish monarchs adopted the shortsighted policy of favoring the sheep-growers at the expense of the farmers. Add to this the fact that only about 45 percent of the soil of Spain is even modestly fertile, while only 10 percent can be described as rich, and it becomes clear why Spain was importing wheat from early in the sixteenth century.

The massive flow of specie accompanied what has come to be called the Price Revolution

a rise in prices that took place all over Europe, even though it was higher in some countries than in others. This inflationary trend was especially marked in Spain and undoubtedly was connected with the influx of gold and silver. The connection between the quantity of gold and silver in circulation and the rise of prices was not immediately seen, but during the second half of the century certain thinkers became aware of the connection. The earliest was a group of men connected with the Spanish University of Salamanca; better known is the versatile Frenchman Jean Bodin, whose work was much more widely known and who made popular the idea that the price inflation was the direct result of the increase in the money supply.

The same idea has been put forward, in a much more elaborate and technical form, in the twentieth century, but it has been challenged in recent years and can no longer be accepted without serious modifications. The influx of gold and silver may now be looked on as one factor in the Price Revolution, but far from the only one. Of the others, perhaps the most important was the growth in population.

The example of Spain shows that a simple increase in the amount of money was not necessarily beneficial. However, in countries where agriculture and industry were in a more flourishing state, and in which the demands of war and foreign policy were not so all-consuming, the increase in the money supply acted as a stimulus to economic activity. Even in such cases, however, its effects were unevenly distributed among the various social classes. Wages rose more slowly than prices, and wage earners did not share in the benefits of economic expansion as did their employers, especially the great capitalists.

For centuries capitalism had been emerging in many fields, and this process was continued, and accelerated, in the sixteenth century. Here again, different sections of the economy and different parts of Europe were affected in varying ways and at varying rates of speed. For our purposes, capitalism may be defined as a system in which enterprises are not controlled by those who supply the labor. The greater guilds of Florence are examples of capitalism long before the sixteenth century, and numerous other examples can be found in Italy, the Low Countries, and throughout western Europe. Moreover, certain types of enterprise that required substantial resources and that were conducted on a large scale, with the concomitant risks, were inevitably capitalistic. This is true, for example, of shipbuilding and international trade. The printing industry, which existed in Europe from the fifteenth century, was essentially capitalistic, at least in the case of the more stable and successful firms. Mining was necessarily a capitalistic enterprise.

Even agriculture, the most conservative branch of economic life, the one that responds most reluctantly to change, was becoming capitalistic in the sixteenth century. The enclosure movement in England exemplifies this trend. The term enclosure refers to the enclosing of the open fields and common lands by means of fences or hedges and converting them to grazing lands for sheep. This process was stimulated by the great demand, both domestic and foreign, for English wool. It was this process that brought

forth the protest of Thomas More in the Utopia about lands in which sheep eat men. There was some social dislocation caused by enclosures; fewer men were required to take care of sheep than were needed for raising crops, and, therefore, enclosures forced many peasants off the land and made them vagabonds, sometimes criminals. Such persons were subjected to severe punishments at the hands of the law in an age that lacked the modern understanding of social change and its victims.

Wool had been the chief article of export for England since the thirteenth century, but by 1500 a shift had occurred. For a long time it had been raw wool that the English sent abroad to be processed into woolen cloth in foreign countries. However, the native English woolen manufacturing industry had been developed to the point where it was now woolen cloth that constituted England's chief export. All woolen cloth going to the Continent passed through Antwerp, which was, therefore, the staple port for this product. It was handled by the Merchant Adventurers, a group of wealthy merchants from various cities in the kingdom, especially London. For the raw wool England still exported, the staple port was Calais still in English possession in 1500 and it was handled by the organization known as the Merchants of the Staple. For high grade wool, England's chief competition was Spain, where the mesta, as we have seen, dominated the rural economy. The prosperity of the Spanish sheep-growers was based on the wool of the Merino sheep, which had first been imported into Spain from North Africa about 1300. Wool was one of the chief articles of trade and manufacture throughout western Europe. The Florentine economy, as previously noted, was largely based on it; and the textile manufactures of the Low Countries continued to be important. Sometimes the names of familiar articles of use can remind us of the places that originally specialized in such articles. For instance the city of Ghent (in French Gand) made and exported gloves, and our word gauntlet preserves this connection.

The enclosers - the men who made their land into pastures for sheep - were capitalists. They employed labor, produced for an international market, and reaped the profits. The English textile industry shows the advent of capitalism in a different field. It manifested itself in the so-called putting-out system. Here the leading figure the capitalist was the merchant who bought the raw material, which he then distributed put out to the craftsmen who performed the various operations required to transform it into finished cloth, and then sold it on the market for a profit.

This system was also known as the domestic system, because the various workers - carders, fullers, spinners, weavers and so forth - worked in their homes. In other places, as in Florence, textile manufacture was carried on by means of a sort of factory system, with the workers gathered together in large workshops. The difference here is related to differences in the respective position of the guilds. In Florence the greater guilds such as the Arte della Lana, or wool guild were great capitalistic organizations that dominated economic and political life. In England, however, as in some other places, the guilds were chiefly concerned with maintaining their exclusive local privileges and preventing

competition among their members, and consequently acting as a restraint upon the expansion of trade and industry.

To circumvent these restraints, the textile capitalists found their workers in rural areas, outside the cities where guilds controlled the economy. This led in some areas to a decline of the guilds and of the prosperity of the towns in which guilds were especially strong. This was not true everywhere; in some places guilds were growing stronger. In France, before the end of the sixteenth century, the crown ordered all craftsmen to belong to guilds. In this way the government, by controlling the guilds, could tighten its hold on the economy. One of the most important, long-term economic and social trends, which had been going on for centuries, was the decline of serfdom. For this there were numerous reasons. To open up new lands, as in the "Drive to the East," inducements had to be offered to peasant cultivators, and freedom was used as such an inducement. The rise of towns, already noted, often had the effect of giving freedom to serfs who escaped from the land and took refuge within the town walls. The labor shortage that followed the Black Death in many areas enhanced the bargaining position of the peasants who survived, and enabled many to secure their freedom.

The development of trade and the increased circulation of money worked in the same direction. As more products from distant places became available, manorial lords began to desire money with which to buy them, and to obtain it they were willing to commute the obligations of their peasants from services and payments in kind to money rents. The manorial lord thus evolved into a landlord, while the servile peasant became a rent-paying tenant. The increased circulation of money here helped the peasant by providing him with the ability to pay his rent. As for the landlord, he could get his work done by hired labor, which might prove economically more profitable than the old manorial services. As a result, serfdom declined very widely in the West though not everywhere and this development was most pronounced in the same areas in which economic development had progressed the most. In eastern Europe, including Russia, where society was overwhelmingly agrarian and dominated by noble landowners, a contrary trend was taking place; and the social and legal position of peasants was being depressed.

Accompanying the changes in commerce, industry, and agriculture and to some extent making them possible was the continued growth of banking and finance. The greatest financial power of the sixteenth century was the house of Fugger in Augsburg. The history of its rise is in itself a sort of synopsis of the development of the European economy.

The founder of the family fortunes was Hans Fugger, a weaver who in about 1367 came to Augsburg from the countryside, where he had probably worked under the domestic system for an Augsburg merchant engaged in international trade. In the city, he expanded his activities, importing cotton and selling cloth made by himself and by other weavers. Soon he began to trade in other wares, and the business was continued by his descendants. They dealt in fruits, spices, and jewels as well as textiles, and they became involved in dealings

with the Hapsburgs and with the papacy. The greatest of the Fuggers was Jacob Fugger II, called Jacob Fugger the Rich (1459-1525). Though the business was already prospering when he took it over, he greatly expanded it. From 1511 to 1527, under his direction, the capital of the business rose tenfold (from 196,791 gulden to 2,021,202). The greatest of Jacob's interests was mining. The family had become involved in this field as early as 1481, when in return for a loan to a member of the Hapsburg family, they received mining rights in the Tyrol. The mining activities of the Fuggers increased in the time of Jacob, who profited in this respect from the favor shown him by Emperor Maximilian I. He enjoyed important rights in the silver and copper mines of the Tyrol, the chief source of these metals before the opening up of the mines in the New World. The Fuggers also acquired complete control of the copper production of Hungary. In addition to the mines, they owned the plants that processed the ore, and employed hundreds of workers. Jacob Fugger attempted, though unsuccessfully, to achieve a world monopoly in copper and to use his monopoly to keep prices high. He was a Catholic as a young man he had planned for a while to be a priest and did much business with the papacy. He completely controlled the financial relationships of the pope with Germany; this included a monopoly on sending to Rome the proceeds from indulgences. In this way the activities of the Fuggers were at least indirectly connected with the early career of Martin Luther. Because of his importance to the papacy, Jacob was able to influence the appointment of bishops.

With his far-flung interests, it was necessary for him to be informed of events throughout Europe. He had agents in all the main business centers who supplied him with a constant flow of information, which has been compared to a press service. Contemporaries, aware of his wealth and power, were frequently opposed to him. There was a great deal of public sentiment that would have supported legal restraints against the power of the great merchants, but Jacob Fugger was protected by the favor of Charles V, to whom he was very valuable, even indispensable.

It was his relationship with Charles that involved Fugger in the most famous event of his career. When Charles became a candidate for the throne of the Holy Roman Empire upon the death of Maximilian I in 1519, he borrowed a great deal of money from the Fugger bank in order to influence the electors in his favor. It was generally believed that these loans were responsible for his success in being chosen emperor. This is shown in an extraordinary letter of 1523 from Fugger to the emperor, in an attempt to collect the money Charles owed him. In the letter Fugger plainly states that without his help, Charles might not have been elected. As security for the loan, and for later loans to the emperor, Fugger received some of the revenues of the Spanish crown. Three great Spanish religious orders were under the control of the king, and for over a century the house of Fugger controlled the income from their property, which included large agricultural holdings and mercury mines.

Under Jacob's nephew Anton the firm reached its height, with a capital of about five million gulden by 1546. However, the connection with the Hapsburgs proved fatal in the

end to the prosperity of the house. Later in the century and in the succeeding one, the Hapsburgs were unable to meet their obligations, and most of the firm's money was lost. Yet the career of the family, and especially of Jacob Fugger, clearly indicates that the power of capital was making itself felt. In some ways, Jacob was the most powerful man of his time.

The career of Jacob Fugger also set in relief the importance of political factors, especially the state, in the economic life in the sixteenth century. As the national state was asserting its involvement in, and control of, numerous fields of human endeavor, its activities more and more affected economic activities as the governments sought, wisely or otherwise, to direct economic life for the increase of national strength.

The emerging nations suffered under handicaps in managing economic policy. One of these lay in the fact that their financial needs had outgrown their ability to meet them; that is, a system of raising money that had been devised to meet the needs of a more or less decentralized feudal society was inadequate for the expanded requirements of the larger and more concentrated units of political power that were now becoming dominant. This problem was aggravated by the general ignorance of economics and public finance.

These factors combined to bring about such expedients as debasing the coinage, which proved to be harmful to the economies of the countries concerned. During the Hundred Years' War, the French crown had resorted on numerous occasions to this practice. In sixteenth-century England, Henry VIII did the same thing, and it was not until the reign of Elizabeth I in the second half of the century that the coinage value was restored. Such a policy militated against a country's prosperity; in the case of England it helps to explain why, in spite of encouraging developments in trade, industry, and agriculture, the country suffered from more or less depressed economic conditions for much of the century.

Perhaps the most obvious way in which political events affected the economy was through war. The wars of the sixteenth century, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, were frequent; international conflict and civil struggle fill the history of the period and had a tremendously destructive effect. A few examples will illustrate the point. The Sack of Rome in 1527 and the Sack of Antwerp "the Spanish Fury" of 1576 were terrible blows to the cities affected. Antwerp had been one of the greatest centers of trade and finance; indeed, it had stood as the key city in the European economy. After the Sack of 1576 although there were additional factors it never regained its former position.

Similarly, the wars of Charles V and Philip II of Spain, although they were not fought on Spanish territory, were financed largely by Spanish, and in particular by Castilian, resources. They had the effect, again combined with other factors, of directing the resources of Spain to unproductive uses, of stifling the development of the economy, and of preventing prosperity. The decline of Spain from its status as one of the great European

powers, a decline from which it has never recovered, was the result of this as much as of any one factor. Those countries that enjoyed an abundance of resources and basic economic strength recovered from the damage done by war. The revolt of the Netherlands was costly to Spain and to that part of the Low Countries that remained under Spanish control, but the new nation of the United Netherlands or Dutch republic went on to become one of the most prosperous of the European states in the next century. The French Wars of Religion were among the most terrible of the century because they were primarily civil wars, and they caused great devastation; but France was, nevertheless, to become the dominant power in Europe in the seventeenth century.

In a general sense, the growth of the nation-state, with increasingly unified control over a territory larger than that of earlier political units, responded well to the needs of the expanding economy and formed mutual alliances between monarchs and merchants. Rulers and businessmen had a common interest in peace and security, in breaking down local and regional restraints on the movement of goods, and in subduing the nobility. It may be said that kings identified themselves socially with the nobles, since they were of the same class; and that the wealth of the great nobility depended largely on the favor of their rulers, who often endowed them with rich estates to enable them to maintain their social prominence. At the same time, when it came to political power, monarchs quite often took care to keep their greatest nobles out of positions of power and to choose as their closest advisers men of undistinguished origin whose position depended entirely on royal favor.

For example, two of the most important advisers of Henry VIII of England were Thomas Wolsey, son of a butcher and innkeeper, and Thomas Cromwell, whose father was a brewer, blacksmith, and fuller. Philip II of Spain followed the policy of using great nobles for positions that took them out of the country, preferring to appoint professional men and priests to positions of importance nearer home. Philip's father, Charles V, had relied for many years on a man of humble origin, Francisco de los Cobos, as the chief figure in the Spanish administration. In France, where the old nobility noblesse d'épée, or the nobility of the sword did remain important, it was supplemented by the noblesse de robe or nobility of the robe men of middle-class extraction who owed their noble status to judicial office. In England, the gentry, a class of non-noble landowners, was becoming dominant in the nation's affairs; one sign of their increasing importance is found in the fact that members of this class formed the great majority of the House of Commons.

What the members of the non-noble business, professional, and landholding classes had to offer their rulers was not only loyalty and service but also money. Methods of acquiring money available to the monarchs of the time were primitive. Taxation was in its infancy and was not yet regarded as the chief way to acquire funds for the conduct of public business. In England the monarch was expected to "live of his own" that is, to meet expenses with such resources as the income of crown lands and the receipts from customs duties. In time of war or other critical situations, Parliament might be induced to grant

taxes, but there was a limit to its willingness to part with money. In France, the *taille*, a combined income and property tax, was levied throughout the country, but the rate varied. In the more recently acquired provinces, where representative bodies estates still existed, these estates served as a means of protecting the inhabitants of their provinces against excessive royal demands, and the *taille* had to be negotiated annually between the royal officials and the estates. Where the estates no longer survived, the *taille* was levied directly on the defenseless inhabitants, and the rate was higher.

Fiscal burdens were often unequally distributed. In France, the First and Second Estates clergy and nobility respectively were privileged classes, which means that they were exempt from many of the payments required of the bulk of the population. The French church sometimes granted the king a "free gift," which was a good deal less than it would have paid if the wealth of the church had been taxed at the rate levied on the unprivileged. In Castile, which supplied the bulk of the revenues of the king of Spain, the nobles and clergy achieved the goal of exemption from taxes in the reign of Charles V, and stopped attending the Cortes the representative assembly so that only delegates from the towns continued to be present at meetings. Deprived of the support of the other classes, these townsmen were not strong enough to put up a successful resistance to the steady growth of royal power.

Thus tax systems were defective for various reasons. Another problem that arose in connection with raising taxes was that much of the revenue tended to remain in the pockets of officials engaged in the collection process. One of the reforms of Sully, the finance minister of Henry IV of France at the end of the sixteenth century, was to take measures that would suppress this sort of speculation and bring the royal revenue to the royal treasury. There were consequently numerous reasons why the tax structures of the European states failed to meet their expanding needs and why various other expedients, generally unhealthy, were tried. Reference has already been made to the debasement of coinage. Another was the sale of titles of nobility. A good or bad example of the results of this practice is found in the experience of France, where the sale of titles came in the sixteenth century to be carried on extensively. For centuries thereafter, individuals of the middle class who had succeeded financially sought to rise socially by buying their way into the aristocracy. This was fiscally disadvantageous in the long run, because elevation into the privileged ranks of the nobility also meant a large degree of exemption from taxation. In this way, many persons who were especially well qualified to contribute to the financial support of the state were relieved of the necessity of carrying their fair share of the burden.

Not only titles but also offices were sold. Here again the case of France is especially instructive. It was customary by the sixteenth century for judicial offices not only to be sold, but also to be passed down from generation to generation in the same family. In 1604 this practice received official status when a tax, called the *Paulette*, was imposed at the time an office was transferred. Thereafter an annual fee was paid that made the office

virtually the property of its holder. Interestingly enough, this did not create a body of mediocrities holding positions for which they were not fitted because the jobs had become family possessions. On the contrary, there came to exist distinguished legal families, proud of their status, competent, and conscientious in carrying out their professional and official duties. Nevertheless, the practice of selling offices came in time to create a vast body of functionaries with overlapping positions, who had bought their posts and intended to recoup their investments at the expense of the citizenry. This oversized bureaucracy also came to hamper the crown and complicate the problem of efficient government.

Some taxes in France were farmed; that is, the right to collect them was sold to corporations of tax-farmers at a fixed sum. The tax-farmers, having bought the privilege of collecting the tax, were primarily interested in making a profit, and they were pretty much given a free rein in doing so. In fact, the coercive force of the state was at their disposal in dealing with recalcitrant taxpayers. These tax-farmers were often guilty of extortionate practices in squeezing money from the hapless French taxpayer, who, it must always be remembered, was a peasant or a town dweller of either the working class or middle class, unprotected by noble or clerical status.

We have had occasion to note that governmental officials and functionaries quite generally managed to acquire for themselves some of the funds that should have gone into the public treasury. This sort of corruption, or graft, was so widespread that it is almost unfair to refer to it in such unflattering terms. Public officials, at least in some cases, were more or less expected to reward themselves from public funds. Cardinal Wolsey, a man of modest origin as we have seen, acquired wealth of vast proportions; the magnificence with which he surrounded himself excited the envy of the great nobles of England, and he even ventured, very imprudently, to rival the king himself in the lavishness of his entertainments and banquets. In the following century, Cardinal Richelieu, whose family was not a wealthy one, left so large an estate at his death in 1642 that his will was several pages long. Indeed, Thomas More and Niccol Machiavelli, so different from one another in many respects, were alike in that they could both truly assert that they had not profited financially by holding public office; each seems to have realized that he was different from his contemporaries in this way.

In the field of commerce, governments were involved from a number of angles. Customs duties, on both imports and exports, were used both to regulate trade and to add to revenues. Organizations of merchants were encouraged by governments, and officials of government often associated themselves with mercantile enterprises by investing in them. The companies that were being formed to open up and carry on trade in the newly discovered parts of the world received charters from their governments that assured them of monopolies on the trade of specific areas. In England a number of companies of this nature were formed during the sixteenth century. The Cathay Company, chartered in 1576 for the Chinese trade, failed. Others were more successful: the Muscovy Company (1555) for the trade with Russia; the Eastland Company (1579) for the Scandinavian and Baltic

trade; the Turkey Company (1581), later known as the Levant Company; and, most famous of all, the English East India Company, chartered in 1600, which was to have a long and amazing career. The new Dutch republic formed its own East India Company in 1602. Numerous other companies were chartered by these governments and others for a long time to come and enjoyed varying degrees of success.

The companies were formed on the joint-stock principle, which had been familiar in Italy for centuries, but which was adopted in northern Europe in the sixteenth century. By this arrangement, ownership was divided into shares of stock, which could be purchased in small or large quantities. Each individual shareholder was an owner of the company in proportion to the number of shares he held. The shareholders chose the officers and directors of the company who carried on business on behalf of the membership. This form of organization had numerous advantages over earlier ones. It made it possible for a larger number of persons to participate in mercantile enterprise, including many who could never have done so on their own; it facilitated the accumulation of large quantities of capital; and it lessened individual risk. In the older partnership form of organization, each partner had unlimited liability for the losses and debts of the firm. In seeking out and exploiting trade opportunities, joint-stock companies did important work in exploring new lands and sometimes in the fields of conquest, settlement, and government. Students of the history of the United States and of India will be familiar with this fact.

By the sixteenth century, it may be said that a European economy had emerged in which the various parts of Europe were bound together by an intricate network of economic and financial relationships. During the first half of the century and part of the second, the city of Antwerp was the financial and commercial center for the European economy, showing once again how the economic center of gravity had shifted from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic. When the preeminence of Antwerp became a casualty of the war for Dutch independence, its place was taken for a while by Amsterdam and later by London.

The sixteenth century saw not only the rise of new economic powers but also the decline of old ones. In addition to the gradually decreasing importance of the Italian city-states, the period also witnessed a falloff in the power and position of the Hanseatic League, or Hansa towns. This was an organization of cities in northern Europe, formed for the purpose of carrying on trade; it had been one of the great powers in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It secured special trading privileges with numerous countries, fought wars to maintain its privileges, and had settlements of merchants from London to Novgorod. The chief city of the league was Lübeck, but many other great cities belonged to it. It could flourish only in a period when central governments in some areas were weak enough to permit the existence of virtually self-governing city-states. With the rise and consolidation of the nations of Europe, its decline was inevitable. By the sixteenth century its greatest days were over, though many causes contributed to its decline and the decline did not come suddenly. Something of the atmosphere of the Hanseatic towns as it came down to our own century is preserved for us in the writings of a descendant of the

prosperous merchant class of a Hanseatic city, Thomas Mann.



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CHAPTER 12

THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY AND SCANDINAVIA

It was in Germany, the Holy Roman Empire, that the Reformation, or Protestant Revolt, began. As we have seen in the first chapter, the long struggle of the emperors to maintain their power against challenges from popes and nobles had ended in failure. The emperor was an elected ruler who presided, with more prestige than authority, over a rather bewildering array of states of various sizes, composition, and levels of political importance. Some were great secular and ecclesiastical principalities, such as the electoral states. Effective political power resided in these states, as also in the imperial free cities, so-called because they owed allegiance to the emperor alone. The prosperous merchants, bankers, and industrialists in these cities, of whom the Fuggers of Augsburg were the most spectacular example, were a growing force in their own right.

Other groups within the empire were less well off. The imperial knights were nobles subject only to the emperor, but as holders of only small territorial units, they were in decay economically, unable to keep pace with the demands of the times and increasingly desperate. Ulrich von Hutten, already referred to in our discussion of German humanism, was one of these knights. Some of them resorted to robbery of merchants to maintain their position. They tended, like Hutten, to be intensely patriotic and opposed to what they considered the foreign authority of the pope.

There was a good deal of popular discontent with the merchants because of rising prices, which were blamed on monopolistic practices. Actually they were due more largely to the increase in the production of precious metal, which in its turn was an attempt to meet the expanding demands of business. The silver mines of the Harz and Bohemia were being exploited intensively for this purpose.

The great bulk of the German people were peasants. No simple generalization can describe their condition because of the great differences that prevailed among them, both from the standpoint of prosperity and of legal status. Many were doing well, and some had holdings so large that they employed other peasants to work for them. On the other hand, there were many poor peasants. Similarly, while many peasants were now legally free,

others, especially in the eastern part of Germany, were being forced by their lords into dependent status. There was widespread discontent among the German peasantry, not so much economic as political and social. It was felt that they were being deprived of any real voice in the affairs of their society, and there was also resentment at the exactions of their lords and of the princes. These exactions seemed like burdensome relics of an earlier time when their masters had performed functions that entitled them to dues and services, functions they no longer fulfilled. The fifteenth century had seen a number of peasant risings, in which the Bundschuh, the traditional peasant's shoe, had served as the symbol of class discontent. These risings had a religious, mystical character. One idea among the German peasantry was that of the great emperor usually Frederick Barbarossa who was not really dead, but who was in hiding, waiting for the time to come when he should reappear to lead his people to gain their rights.

The central institutions of the empire lacked real authority. The Imperial Diet continued to meet frequently and make important decisions, but the enforcement of these decisions depended on the individual states. There was no effective system of courts and no real power to carry out judicial decisions. As a result, it was difficult to preserve the public peace, and local feuds were common. The system of taxation was also inadequate; attempts to collect a general tax, known as the "common penny," had been unsuccessful. From this failure resulted military weakness, since money was lacking to pay a standing army. In case of need, each state of the empire was supposed to supply a contingent of troops, but these troops were not always forthcoming. Consequently, the empire was unable to play a truly effective part in European diplomatic and military affairs.

These weaknesses were obvious to all, and many attempts at reform were made. Maximilian I, who became emperor in 1493, tried to strengthen the institutions of central government. There was a reform party among the electors, but its aims were in conflict with those of the emperor; while he strove to increase his own power, they sought to assure the participation of the members (estates) of the empire in any new scheme of imperial government. In any event, during the first years of Maximilian's rule, ambitious changes were undertaken. The diet was to be endowed with great powers and to meet every year. An imperial court was to be established. A common penny was to be collected, which would increase the emperor's income. In the end, however, nothing very important came of these endeavors. The weakness of the empire continued, and the emperor remained impotent and poor. To some extent the failure of reform can be attributed to the character of Maximilian himself. Although gifted, ambitious, and personally attractive, he scattered his efforts in too many directions, pursued the most extravagant ambitions with inadequate preparation, and lacked the necessary persistence. At one time he even dreamed of becoming pope as well as emperor.

Maximilian did pursue with success the Hapsburg policy of increasing the family domains through marriage. His own wife, Mary of Burgundy, daughter and heiress of Charles the Bold, last of the great dukes of Burgundy, brought him most of the Netherlands, which he

was able to retain in spite of a challenge from France and to pass to Philip the Handsome, his son by Mary. Philip in turn was married to Joanna, oldest daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain.

Charles, first son of this marriage, was born in Ghent in 1500. He inherited the Netherlands, Spain and its possessions in the New World, and the Hapsburg lands in Austria, as well as Naples and Sicily, which belonged to Spain. When he also became Holy Roman Emperor in 1519 after Maximilian's death, he was ruler of the greatest empire that had existed in Europe since the time of Charlemagne more than seven centuries earlier. As king of Spain he was Charles I, but he is more often referred to, in dealing with general European affairs, by his imperial title of Charles V. A sister of Charles, Mary, became the wife of Louis II, the king of Hungary, where the monarchy was elective. After Louis's death fighting the Turks in 1526, the Hungarians elected Ferdinand, brother of Charles and Mary, to the throne. Since Ferdinand was also the elected king of Bohemia, Hapsburg influence extended far into central and eastern Europe, and the choice of members of the family to wear the Hungarian and Bohemian crowns became an established practice. On the eve of the Reformation, the church in Germany exhibited a combination of religious zeal among the laity with secularization in the hierarchy, especially among the higher clergy. There was a strong consciousness of abuses, and in the fifteenth century the territorial rulers had intervened more often than before to try to effect some improvement. Germans felt that they had a particular grievance toward the papacy in Rome. They were convinced that the popes were exploiting Germany financially and that the absence of a powerful central government to provide protection laid them open to more serious extortion than that experienced by other peoples.

The most significant issue in European diplomacy in the first half of the sixteenth century was the conflict between France and Spain. This conflict had manifested itself as a struggle over Naples in the first years of the century. From the time when Charles became king of Spain and emperor, the struggle was between Valois and Hapsburg. It was to be fought out on a number of fronts and to last for decades. Charles had to overcome the rivalry of the young French king, Francis I, in order to be elected emperor. In the end, Charles was chosen, largely with the aid of money from the Fuggers, which enabled him to influence the votes of the electors. This rivalry with Francis continued during the lifetimes of both monarchs and was inherited by their descendants.

>MARTIN LUTHER

At the time when Charles was elected emperor in 1519, Martin Luther had already begun his career as a reformer. Luther was born in 1483 in Eisleben. His father, Hans, came from peasant stock but had gone into mining, rising from poverty to a position of prosperity and respect, though he never became wealthy. Some of Luther's early education was received

from members of the Brethren of the Common Life. In 1501 he entered the University of Erfurt, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1502 and becoming Master of Arts three years later. He was trained in the "modern" school of philosophy, which followed the teachings of William of Ockham, a great English thinker of the fourteenth century. One of the basic principles of Ockham's thought was a separation between faith and reason, in contrast with the position of Thomas Aquinas, who had tried to carry as far as possible the rational consideration of the truths of the faith. In Ockham's view, reason was inadequate to apprehend theological truth, which should, therefore, be accepted by faith alone. Luther's teachers also professed the Ockhamist doctrine of the unlimited potentiality of the human will to earn merit for salvation.

Having finished his studies in the Arts faculty, Luther began to study law. His legal studies ended, however, as a result of an experience he had on July 2, 1505. Returning to school from a visit home, he was caught in a great thunderstorm. When a bolt of lightning threw him to the ground, he was so terrified that he made a vow to St. Anne that, if she preserved him, he would become a monk. About two weeks later, he entered the monastery of the Augustinian Hermits at Erfurt as a novice. Though Luther's vow came suddenly, under great stress, it seems likely that it was the result of much prior thought. Certainly his later career makes it possible to argue that, when he vowed to become a monk, it was at least partly because he had been pondering the state of his soul and his prospects for salvation. In this he was like other serious men and women who, over many centuries, had chosen the religious life as the best way to win divine grace. As a monk, he manifested exemplary devotion to his calling, and in 1506 became a full-fledged member of the order. He showed so much promise that his superiors selected him for the priesthood, and he was ordained in 1507.

While still in Erfurt, he was ordered to begin the study of theology, which he did. By the time he received the doctorate in theology in 1512, he was at the University of Wittenberg, founded only twelve years earlier by the elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise. Luther became a member of the theological faculty there, with the duty of lecturing on the Bible. He also preached regularly and began to be appointed to administrative positions in his order. But during these years he was undergoing a profound spiritual crisis.

This crisis was the result of his tormented sense of sin and guilt and his fear that he could never attain the certainty of God's favor. He had been taught that the will had the power to free itself from sinfulness and earn grace. In spite of his most diligent efforts, however, he could not divest himself of a sense of his own unworthiness. He had also been taught to think of God as a stern Judge, exacting absolute purity of heart, which Luther came to see as unattainable. How was he to find assurance of salvation from a God who demanded the impossible and threatened with damnation those who failed to attain it? In his distress he turned to the Bible, and here, finally, he found his answer.

It is not clear when the breakthrough came; it may have been as late as the autumn of

1518. In studying the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, he was struck by a new meaning in the words, "The just shall live by faith alone" (verse 17). It came to him now that this meant that man is justified in the eyes of God by faith alone; that good works, in the sense of works that could earn merit for salvation, were useless; and that God reaches out in His love for man, through Christ, to impute His righteousness to him. Man is still, and always in this world must be, a sinner, but through wholehearted trusting faith in God he is assured of grace. God was seen no more as the stern implacable Judge but as the loving Father.

Put briefly, this is the doctrine of justification by faith, the central idea of the Reformation, and, though Luther may not have realized it at once, it contained revolutionary implications. It undermined the whole apparatus of mechanical religion and external observances that had grown up in the church. It also implied, as Luther saw it, a denial of free will, in the sense that the will was free to perform works of righteousness. For Luther, the will is always in bondage to sin, and only divine grace is capable of producing righteousness. This involves a pessimistic view of human nature, in contrast both to Catholic doctrine and to the exaltation of man's dignity that characterized the thought of the humanists. However, man justified by faith will do good deeds and will live for his neighbor. Good works do not make a man good, but a good man that is, one with faith will do good works.

His new insight made him more critical of certain practices in the church, including the sale of indulgences. An indulgence was a remission of part, or all, of the penance imposed by the church on sinners as a means of satisfaction for sin. This meant, according to the teaching of the church, remission of part or all of one's punishment in Purgatory. By this time, the sale of indulgences had become a device for replenishing the coffers of the church, and abuses had crept in. Sellers of indulgences, whose job it was to make them attractive, often made excessive claims for their wares. The simple buyer, ignorant of fine, theological distinctions, was convinced that by his purchase he was acquiring a ticket to Heaven, either for himself or for some dear one who had passed away and was presumably being released forever from Purgatory by this pious expenditure. So much had the sale of indulgences become a business matter that such leading banking houses as the Medici and the Fuggers served the papacy in collecting the proceeds.

Many persons objected to indulgences because of the financial abuses connected with them. Luther's objections went deeper; to him the danger of indulgences was that they militated against true Christian repentance by giving a false sense of security and encouraging the belief that one's sins were all forgiven. He was aroused to strong protest in 1517 by the activities of Johann Tetzel, a Dominican who was selling indulgences in territories adjoining Saxony. In 1515, Pope Leo X had authorized an indulgence to help in the reconstruction of the church of St. Peter's in Rome. An unpublicized purpose of the indulgence was to help young Albrecht of Hohenzollern, the youngest brother of Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, raise money to pay the fees required to become archbishop of

Mainz, a position that entitled its holder to be chief prelate of Germany and president of the electoral college. Since Albrecht already held other high offices in the German church, he had to pay a very large sum as dispensation from this violation of the rules. To raise this money he secured a loan from the Fuggers. The pope, in turn, agreed to give him a share of the income from the indulgence sale to repay his loan. Tetzel, an experienced and effective salesman, was reported to have made extravagant claims for the efficacy of his indulgences, urging his hearers to sell their clothes if necessary to buy them. Reports came back to Luther, who was so disturbed that he finally decided to take action. Therefore, on October 31, 1517, he nailed to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg his Ninety-five Theses, or propositions on indulgences and related topics. (It has been persuasively argued that Luther never actually nailed these theses to the door, but there is at least no doubt that he did draw them up and that they soon became widely known.)

The theses were written in Latin, the language of the universities, in order to serve as topics for academic debate, in accordance with custom. Luther sent copies to Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz; to the bishop of Bamberg, in whose diocese Wittenberg was located; and probably to other important churchmen in the vicinity. In the theses, while admitting that indulgences have a legitimate place, Luther minimizes their importance in comparison with the Gospel and with works of love and mercy. He also has some implied criticism of the pope: If the pope can redeem souls from Purgatory, why does he not do so simply out of love, rather than for money? Rich as he is, why does he not build St. Peter's with his own money, rather than with that of poor believers?

The theses never did produce an academic debate, but they spread far and wide, were translated into German, and helped to make Luther a national figure. They roused the opposition of the Dominicans, Tetzel's order, and came to the attention of the pope. The next years were filled with negotiations, as the pope tried to settle the matter, while the elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, protected Luther, keeping him from going to Rome to be tried. Had it not been for the unflinching support of Frederick (who never actually abandoned the old faith), Luther's fate and that of the Reformation might have been much different. Political considerations played their part, since the pope was anxious to conciliate the elector. Meanwhile, Luther, never politically-minded, went on defending his views and, in the course of his defense, became more aware of their implications.

An important stage in Luther's career was marked by the debate that took place in Leipzig in 1519. The chief disputants were Luther himself and the formidable Johann Maier von Eck, a well-known theologian and accomplished debater, who had been carrying on a controversy in writing with Luther. Now they met face to face. In the course of the debate, under pressure from his opponent, Luther caused a sensation by his assertion that many of the views of Hus, the Bohemian heretic who had been burned at the stake in 1415, were "very Christian and evangelical." Before the debate was over, Eck had forced from Luther the admission, implied in his defense of Hus, that a general council of the church might err. The debate marks an important phase in Luther's development. By making him face

the implications of the positions he had taken, it showed more clearly than before how far he had come from orthodoxy. The breach with Rome was widening.

It was not long before it became final. In June 1520, a papal bull against Luther was formally prepared. Entitled *Exsurge Domine* (Arise, O Lord), it condemned the errors attributed to Luther and branded him a heretic. He was given sixty days in which to recant before being publicly condemned. In reply, he not only wrote a tract condemning the bull as the work of Antichrist but, on December 20, 1520, in the presence of a crowd of students and teachers from the university, committed to the flames both the bull itself and the canon law. It was clear that the break was complete. The burning of the bull, however, simply ratified what had been true for some time previously. His writings in 1520, especially his *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, in its full-scale attack on the Roman sacramental system, show that Luther had cast off all connection with that church.

In his *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, another of his writings of 1520, Luther expounded his idea that every Christian is a priest. This does not imply the abolition of the clergy, but it does mean that every individual Christian can, and must, go directly to God in faith. It also means that the "spiritual estate," or clergy, has no superiority over the "temporal estate," but that each Christian serves God in his calling. The earthly calling, therefore, becomes a means of Divine Service and is sanctified. Luther had also been teaching for some time, in accordance with the doctrine of justification by faith, that monastic vows, considered as good works, were worthless. In response to these teachings, many monks and nuns left their cloisters and entered the world. Many of them got married; one of them, in fact, married Martin Luther. Luther replaced the ideal of celibacy with the ideal of the Christian home and of the family as the milieu in which to serve God. He exemplified this ideal in his own life as a devoted husband and a loving father to his several children by his wife, the former Katharina von Bora, whom he married in 1525.

In October 1520 the young emperor Charles V was crowned at Aachen. Early in 1521 his first Imperial Diet met at Worms, and Luther was invited to appear there for a hearing of his case. Charles had promised the electors, as a condition of his election, that no subject would be condemned without a hearing. On April 17 and 18, Luther appeared before the assembled dignitaries of the empire, many of whom were his sympathizers, to defend his writings. Asked whether he was willing to stand by what he had written, he stood firm on what he had said. He has been quoted for centuries as having concluded with the words, "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise." Though these words may not actually have been uttered, they do not essentially falsify his position.

Since it proved impossible to shake Luther from his position, he left Worms a few days later. On the way home, he was "kidnapped" by some of Frederick the Wise's men and taken for his own safety to the Wartburg, a castle belonging to the elector. At the diet, after many members had departed, including Frederick and other sympathizers of Luther,

the remaining members at Charles's initiative issued the Edict of Worms, condemning Luther and making him an outlaw. An outlaw he remained for the rest of his life. Although the edict was impossible to enforce, it was important because it forced the followers of Luther to become rebels against the emperor, much as Luther deplored any resistance to constituted authority.

It was during his stay in the Wartburg that Luther began one of his most important undertakings, the translation of the Bible into German. Using Erasmus's Greek text as the basis for his work, he translated the entire New Testament, which was published in 1522. During the next few years he was to translate the Old Testament from Hebrew, publishing the entire text of his German Bible in 1534. For Luther, the Bible was the sole authority in matters of faith, and he had already declared that each Christian should be able to go to the Scriptures for himself. Therefore, the text should be available in the native tongue for those who could read no Latin. Luther was convinced that he had unlocked the meaning of the Bible after years of popish darkness; he was to be shocked as he found how many differing interpretations his contemporaries would extract from the sacred text. Luther's Bible, in addition to its religious importance, was a literary masterpiece and did more than any other work to create the modern German literary language. After his return in 1522 to Wittenberg, which was to remain his home for the rest of his life, Luther devoted himself to building his church. He never approved of the word Lutheran or claimed to be founding a church; this had been done once and for all by Jesus, and Luther saw himself as a reformer or restorer. He revised the services of the church, substituting the vernacular for Latin and emphasizing the congregational singing of hymns; he loved music above almost everything else. His service was too conservative, too close to the Catholic form to satisfy some of his followers. He produced catechisms for the instruction of the young, and he was among the first to advocate free public education, in order that all might be able to read the Bible. In matters of liturgy he was indifferent, permitting wide variations.

One of his problems in the 1520s was the outbreak of revolutionary risings, which he feared would be attributed to his influence. The first was that of the imperial knights in 1522. Two of the leaders of the knights were Franz von Sickingen and Ulrich von Hutten, who were both attracted to Luther's teachings. The rising failed; Sickingen was killed; and Hutten, fatally ill, fled to Switzerland, where his short and tragic life ended in 1523. Luther had nothing to do with the rising; indeed, he was unalterably opposed to any kind of revolutionary violence and desperately anxious to keep his movement free from any connection with such activity. He regarded the secular authority as divinely ordained to punish the wicked and protect the good, and, therefore, urged obedience to it. If it commanded anything against the law of God in practice, this meant, for instance, if it commanded a person to give up his faith it would not be obeyed, but it must not be resisted. In other words, better martyrdom than resistance.

The discontent of the peasants broke out once more in the great Peasants' Revolt of 1524-25, which was a crisis for all Germany. The unrest that had long existed among the

peasantry was aggravated by the rising cost of living, the monopolistic practices of the hated merchant class, and the use of the revived Roman law to increase the power of the lords over their peasants. Serfdom had long been felt to be an abuse, and it is not surprising that Luther's teachings about Christian liberty were interpreted misinterpreted, according to him to supply a warrant for the peasants' demand for freedom.

The revolt began in the late summer of 1524, and its main centers came to be Swabia, Franconia, and Thuringia. The demands of the peasants reflected economic, social, and religious discontent. The Swabian peasants, for example, refused to pay tithes, threatened death to some of their priests, and practically abolished confession. At Mühlhausen in Thuringia, the situation became inflammable with the arrival of Thomas Müntzer in August. He combined apocalyptic religious ideas with a predilection for radical social change. Not only did he claim to possess direct revelations from the Holy Spirit, but he also preached violence against the nobility and proposed as his ideal a regime of absolute communistic equality. Under his leadership many peasants took arms against their lords, while the nobles, finding themselves threatened, combined to crush the rebels. On May 15, 1525, at Frankenhausen, the inexperienced peasant forces were slaughtered, and Müntzer was captured. After retracting his errors, he was executed. Elsewhere there were also acts of violence by the peasants: destruction, pillaging, sacrilege, even massacres. Eventually, however, all the risings were suppressed with great cruelty. In the final outcome, nothing was done to alleviate the lot of the peasants or to redress their grievances; in fact, their conditions were made worse.

In these events Luther found himself involved whether he wanted to be or not. Some of his writings had given rise to the expectation that he would sympathize with the rebels. In 1525 a group of Swabian peasants drew up a set of "Twelve Articles" formulating their demands. They included the abolition of serfdom and the alleviation of feudal burdens. Copies were sent to persons chosen by the peasants as qualified to be arbiters of their cause; Luther was one of these. In response he wrote his Admonition to Peace in which he disclaimed responsibility for the rising; condemned the lords for their oppression, which had brought about the revolt; and admonished the peasants that nothing, not even the wickedness of their rulers, gave them the right to rebel. They were threatening to quench his gospel by acting contrary to it though in its name. He rejected the demand for the abolition of serfdom on the ground that Christian liberty is not an external thing, and that to throw off serfdom would deprive the lords of their property.

Luther personally traveled among the disaffected peasants at some risk to himself, hoping to restore peace by persuasion, but found it impossible. He therefore concluded that force would be necessary to suppress the disorders. A harsh and cruel tone appears in his comments on the revolt, most of all in his little tract, *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants*, in which he urged that the rebels should be cut down like mad dogs. When the lords got the upper hand, however, and were mercilessly slaughtering the peasants far beyond the requirements of safety, Luther pleaded for mercy and condemned

the cruelty of the lords. However, he was no longer a hero to the peasants as he had been, and many of them turned to more radical religious sects.

At about the same time came the final break between Luther and Erasmus. At first Erasmus had asked for a fair hearing for Luther and had interceded with Charles V on his behalf. Luther, for his part, at first treated Erasmus with great respect. As time passed, it became clear to both men that they differed in basic ways. For Erasmus, the Lutheran movement brought tumult and disorder; for Luther, Erasmus was too timid, holding back when he should have joined the cause of the Gospel against Rome. Luther felt that Erasmus laughed at things that should make men lament. With Luther's deep sense of sin and the corruption of human nature, he could never accept the humanistic faith in man's capacity for moral improvement. Erasmus was under continual pressure from the Catholic side to come out publicly against Luther. Eventually he yielded, publishing *A Discourse on Free Will* in 1524. He chose a point on which there was a profound gap between the humanist view of man and his destiny, and that of Luther and his followers. Erasmus defended the ability of man, through his own efforts, to contribute to his salvation. In the following year Luther answered with his *The Bondage of the Will*. He contended that the will is free to fulfill the civil or moral law, but is helpless when it comes to the task of fulfilling God's righteousness. It cannot, without divine grace, turn from sin to God or choose between God and Satan. Toward Erasmus he expressed himself very harshly, denying him the name of theologian. Erasmus, hurt by Luther's tone, answered; and Luther in turn replied just as uncivilly as before. The break between them was complete, though Erasmus may always have cherished the hope for an eventual reunion of the warring factions within Christendom. Luther, for his part, was not charitable or even courteous to those who disagreed with him; over the years his disposition became, if anything, even worse. At about the same time as the split with Erasmus came the break between the Lutheran and Zwinglian branches of the Reformation. It was on the doctrine of the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, that the two men differed most clearly. Luther, though he rejected the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, still believed in the Real Presence of the body and blood of Christ along with the bread and wine, while Zwingli had taken the far more radical position that the bread and wine only signified the body and blood, which were not actually present.

In 1529 Luther, Zwingli, their chief lieutenants, and other reformers, met at Marburg in the territory of Landgrave Philip of Hesse, who had arranged the meeting. Philip was a Lutheran prince, who foresaw the possibility of military attack by Catholic forces and sought to unite for defensive purposes those territories in Germany that followed Luther with those parts of Switzerland that had adopted the teachings of Zwingli. No defensive alliance was possible without a confessional agreement, which Philip hoped to secure by this meeting, the Marburg Colloquy, as it is generally called. Philip's hopes were disappointed, however, and the conference succeeded only in showing that an accommodation was impossible. The explanation has often been sought in Luther's intransigence, and this may have been the chief obstacle. However, it has also been

suggested that the responsibility must lie with Luther's chief adviser and colleague, Philip Melanchthon, who was anxious to leave the road open for reconciliation with the Catholics and, therefore, persuaded Luther to abandon the Zwinglians. In any case, Luther always spoke with great bitterness about Zwingli and his followers, whom he called Sacramentarians.

Though Luther might deplore the intrusion of politics into his movement, he could not prevent it. Many German princes led their states into the new church, and most of the imperial free cities did likewise. Some bishoprics also were "secularized," that is, lost to the Catholic church. The religious issue became a regular feature of the diets, and the Lutheran members more and more took on the character of a political party. The emperor, though firmly committed to upholding the old faith, was severely restricted not only by the inadequate forces at his disposal but also by the distracting effect of his numerous problems outside Germany. Conflicts with the French and the Turks compelled him to seek the help of the German Lutherans against these external enemies, and this help could only be purchased by a policy of toleration. At the Diet of Speyer of 1526, the final decree (or Recess) in effect left the Lutheran members free to pursue their own religious policy. When the diet met in 1529, again at Speyer, the Catholic party was dominant, and the Recess was much more unfavorable to the Lutherans. The new doctrines were not to be allowed to spread until the meeting of a church council such a council had been long called for by both sides and until Catholics in territories that had broken from Rome were fully tolerated. On the other hand, Lutherans in Catholic territories were to be put to death. The Lutherans were impelled to issue a Protest, from which they were called Protestants. This is the first use of the word as a designation of non-Roman Christians.

In 1530, when the diet met at Augsburg, Charles was in a strong position. The Sack of Rome in 1527 had increased his influence with the pope and strengthened his growing hold in Italy. In 1529 the Turks had been repelled in an attempt to take Vienna, and in the same year the Treaty of Cambrai with France brought temporary peace with the old enemy on terms favorable to Charles. In 1530 Charles was crowned emperor in Bologna by the pope. He came to the diet the first he had attended personally since Worms in 1521 determined to settle the religious question once and for all. Luther, as an outlaw, could not be there; he stayed at the castle of Coburg, in constant touch with Melanchthon, who was charged with presenting the Lutheran position. This position was embodied in what has become known as the Augsburg Confession, still recognized today as the most authoritative statement of the Lutheran faith.

Melanchthon, anxious as always for reconciliation with the old church, made as many concessions as he could enough to worry Luther but the Confession was still rejected by the Catholics. Instead, the diet gave the Protestants until April 15, 1531, to submit. Otherwise Charles would use force against them. In this dangerous situation, a Lutheran League for defensive purposes was brought into being. It was formed in 1531 at the town of Schmalkalden, by six princes and ten free cities; other states joined later. Charles V,

still distracted by foreign problems and in need of Protestant help, was unable for several years to fulfill his threats. The German Protestants turned to the French for assistance, and in this way there began a French policy of support for foreign Protestants, which was to last until the reign of Louis XIV. Meanwhile, an attempt was made in Germany to settle the religious problem by a series of conferences between the opposing groups in 1540 and 1541. In spite of much good will and sincere efforts on both sides, the attempt failed; probably it was from this time that war was inevitable.

In the years around 1540, the Lutheran cause was weakened morally and politically by one of its strongest defenders, Philip of Hesse, as a result of Philip's bigamy in 1539. He had consulted Luther, who advised this step on the grounds that bigamy was better than divorce, but counseled secrecy. The news got out, however, putting Philip in a very difficult position, because bigamy under imperial law was a capital offense. Philip had to seek the emperor's pardon, which was granted in 1541 at the price of a treaty that made Philip the emperor's ally, though this alliance proved to be only temporary. Luther's reputation also suffered when it became known that he had given Philip advice to commit bigamy. Luther by no means meant this to set a precedent; he regarded himself as a confessor seeking a way out of a difficult situation. From an early date Luther had felt compelled to rely on the rulers and governing classes for support of his church and movement. It is quite possible that these dominant forces in German life would have taken charge of the cause whether or not he had wished it. It is, however, a great exaggeration to make Luther responsible, at least in part, for absolutism and even the totalitarian state. He never believed in the unrestricted authority of the state in religious matters. In fact, he felt very strongly that in matters of conscience and in matters affecting the soul, the temporal power had no right to interfere; its jurisdiction extended only to external things, such as keeping order. On the other hand, as he grew older, he tended to become more harsh and to include religious dissent under the heading of sedition, which he thought deserved the extreme penalty. This harshness is shown in two late writings, an attack on the papacy and one on the Jews.

He was a man of great virtues and of faults to match, but whether one regards him with sympathy or with aversion, his thought and work have exercised a tremendous influence. It is only during the present century, however, that scholarship, especially in Germany and the Scandinavian countries, has arrived at an adequate understanding of his meaning and has shown how relevant it is to our contemporary concerns. Catholic scholars as well as Protestants recognize his greatness, though they may deplore the directions in which he was finally led.

Luther did not live to see the outbreak of the war between the two religious factions in Germany. He died in 1546. In the same year the war broke out: The emperor and the Catholics faced the Schmalkaldic League in what was called the Schmalkaldic War. In the early stages the emperor was victorious; at the battle of Mühlberg, on April 24, 1547, he made the elector of Saxony, one of the Protestant leaders, a prisoner. Later Philip of Hesse

surrendered and was also imprisoned. In spite of his victory, the emperor still hoped for reconciliation in religion. Accordingly, at the Diet of Augsburg, which met in 1547-48, he tried to achieve a settlement by means of the so-called Interim.

This Augsburg Interim of 1548, which was issued as a Recess of the Diet and was intended to establish a religious settlement for all Germany, was a compromise, but one that favored the Catholics. Some concessions were made to the Lutherans, including communion in both kinds and marriage of priests. It met with objections from both sides, and could not be enforced generally. Thus the religious problem was not yet settled. In 1526 the Protestant princes formed the League of Torgau, and in 1552 made an alliance with Henry II of France in the Treaty of Chambord. In return for a subsidy to the German Protestants, France was to receive the three bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun. In the same year, the league attacked Charles, who was then at Innsbruck, taking him by surprise and forcing him to flee. In spite of the Treaty of Passau (also in 1552), fighting continued. After his unsuccessful siege of Metz (1552-53), Charles left Germany, to which he never returned.

In 1555 the Imperial Diet met at Augsburg, and here a religious peace was made. The Religious Peace of Augsburg was embodied in the recess of the diet and, hence, became part of imperial law and of the imperial constitution. The peace ratified the situation whereby the religion of the ruler determined the religion of his subjects. This settlement was confined to the Catholic and Lutheran confessions; Calvinism, which was growing in strength in Germany, received no legal recognition. There was one truly tolerant provision in the Peace of Augsburg: In the imperial free cities, where both confessions existed side by side, this coexistence should be allowed to continue. The most difficult problem was to decide the case of spiritual princes who went over to the new faith, taking their territories with them.

This issue for a time threatened the whole settlement, but finally a solution was found in the so-called ecclesiastical reservation. This provided that all ecclesiastical lands were to remain in possession of the church that held them in 1552. Any prelate who became Protestant after that date was to step down and make way for the choice of a Catholic successor. The Catholics never regarded this arrangement as final, and the Protestants violated it, continuing to secularize church lands. Thus the ecclesiastical reservation, together with the growing strength of Calvinism in Germany, provided a source of future trouble. Nevertheless, according to a distinguished authority, the ecclesiastical reservation helped the survival of German Catholicism more than any other legal act, and saved the ecclesiastical principalities for another 250 years.⁹

GERMANY AFTER THE PEACE OF AUGSBURG

The Peace of Augsburg was not a definitive settlement of the religious issue in Germany,

but only a truce brought about by the exhaustion of the contending parties. It marked the final failure of Charles V's German policy, and no doubt contributed to his decision to abdicate. During the next few years he gave up, one after another, his many titles and retired to spend his last days in Spain, near the monastery of Yuste. He continued to take an interest in the affairs of the Hapsburg countries and to give occasional advice until his death in 1558.

The abdication of Charles meant the division of the Hapsburg line into two branches. Spain and the territories it ruled, including the Netherlands, Milan, Naples and Sicily, Franche-Comt and the developing New World empire passed to Charles's son, Philip II. The imperial crown, however, and the Austrian hereditary lands went to Charles's younger brother, Ferdinand, king of Hungary and Bohemia, who had been the emperor's deputy for German affairs. As Charles had become Spanish in his outlook, Ferdinand (now Ferdinand I) had become thoroughly German. His descendants were regularly elected to the crowns of the empire and of Hungary and Bohemia. Since the two branches of the Hapsburg house continued to coordinate their policies and sealed their cooperation by frequent intermarriages, it is still accurate, even after the days of Charles V, to speak of a Hapsburg interest in European affairs. One of the fixed points of Hapsburg policy was the support of the Roman Catholic faith, though Emperor Maximilian II (1564 76) was personally inclined to Protestantism. The Catholic revival or Counter Reformation (See Chapter 19) received faithful support from the Hapsburgs, and to this support it owed a great deal of its success in Germany and the empire. This Catholic revival was one of the forces that threatened the permanence of the Peace of Augsburg. At the time of the peace, Catholicism in Germany was at a low ebb, compelled to make serious concessions to the Protestants. It was no doubt inevitable that, once the Catholic forces had regained strength, a determined effort would be made to recoup their losses.

Though Calvinism had no official status, it spread steadily in Germany. Two of the four secular electors became Calvinists: the elector of the Palatine, Frederick III (1559 76) and the elector of Brandenburg, John Sigismund (1608 19). The inroads of Calvinism not only introduced a new element of discord for the Catholics, but also militated against Protestant unity, because Lutherans and Calvinists, instead of cooperating, became determined rivals. The most politically important of the German Lutheran princes, the electors of Saxony, followed a policy of cooperation with the emperors and of hostility to the Calvinists. The timidity and shortsightedness of the Saxon electors illustrates the political ineptitude that forfeited the advantages the Protestants had enjoyed.

Another source of Protestant weakness was the division in the ranks of the Lutherans. Melancthon, who after Luther's death was the foremost Lutheran theologian, alienated many of Luther's followers by what seemed to them his excessive willingness to compromise. Against him were arrayed the Gnesio-Lutherans (Genuine Lutherans).

The divisions among their opponents gave the Catholics an opportunity, which they did

not fail to grasp. In 1557 a Venetian diplomat estimated that Germany was nine-tenths Protestant, a figure which, though no doubt an exaggeration, reveals the depths to which Catholicism had sunk. From this desperate situation the church was to make an extraordinary recovery, particularly in the seventeenth century.

Friction between the confessional groups led in 1609 to the formation of a Protestant Union and a Catholic League. The Protestant group was weakened by internal divergences between Lutherans and Calvinists and by the failure of a number of Protestant states, including Saxony, to join. In the Catholic League, the most prominent member was the duke of Bavaria. Numerous clashes between Protestants and Catholics within the empire during the next few years drew the lines of division tighter and tighter, until the ground was prepared for the outbreak in 1618 of the Thirty Years' War, in which the future of Protestantism in Germany, and perhaps all of Europe, would be at stake.

THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES AND THE REFORMATION

Two facts stand out in the history of the Reformation in the Scandinavian countries. First, these were the only states outside Germany where Lutheranism became the state religion. Second, the initiative for the religious changes came largely from the crown. In Sweden, the coming of the new church was closely bound up with the birth of national independence.

In 1397 the three kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway were united under one monarch in the Union of Kalmar. The terms of the union were vague, however, and it failed to hold together. The strongest of the three kingdoms was Denmark, but the Danish monarchs, though they managed to secure their hold over Norway, were not so successful with Sweden, which tended to be substantially independent. In the fifteenth century the kings of Denmark became rulers of Schleswig and Holstein. The crown was elective, and each newly chosen king had to agree to a "capitulation" which made concessions to the nobility at the expense of the powers of the crown. The power of the higher clergy also grew; the tenacity with which they clung to their great wealth and temporal power made them unpopular and thus became a factor in the success of the Reformation.

A turning point in the history of the Scandinavian countries came in 1513 with the accession of Christian II, whose marriage to Isabella of the Netherlands brought with it a tie to her brother, the future Hapsburg emperor Charles V. Though Christian was a gifted and learned monarch, he possessed fatal qualities cruelty, ruthlessness, treachery which were to cost him his throne. He aimed at extending his power, and that of the peasants and burghers, at the expense of the nobles and clergy. He wanted to make the monarchy hereditary in all three kingdoms. The promises that he had to make at his election, which would have imposed limitations on his power, he ignored in practice. In order to follow the momentous developments of Christian's reign and the course of the Scandinavian

Reformation, it is convenient to treat events in Sweden and Denmark separately.

SWEDEN

When Christian was elected king of Denmark, he found Sweden practically independent. Though there was a faction that favored recognizing him as king, the country was dominated by the opposition party, led by Sten Sture, the administrator of the kingdom. Civil war broke out between the parties, and Christian led troops to Sweden to further his own cause. In the fighting, he managed to secure hostages who were taken to Denmark. One of them was a young man named Gustaf Eriksson, later to be known as Gustavus Vasa and to become the father of Swedish independence. By 1520 Christian had defeated Sten Sture, who died after a battle, and made himself master of Sweden; on November 4 he was crowned king. He proceeded to lose the fruits of his efforts by the treacherous execution of a large number of persons who had fought on the opposing side. This was the famous Bloodbath of Stockholm (November 8), in which more than eighty persons died, including two bishops and many nobles. One of the victims was the father of Gustavus Eriksson. This ghastly deed, which Christian had hoped would subdue Sweden and make it more submissive, had the opposite effect; it created an antagonism that led to the rejection of his rule. It had another important consequence: The pretext for the executions had been opposition to the church and especially to the archbishop of Uppsala, who had led the fight against Sten Sture. Consequently, Stockholm's bloodbath roused great antipathy to the church and facilitated the break with Rome.

Gustaf Eriksson (Gustavus Vasa) had meanwhile escaped from Denmark and returned to Sweden by May 1520. He took up the leadership of the Swedish fight for independence, and, with the help of the city of Lbeck, he succeeded in uniting the country behind him and freeing it from Danish rule. In 1523, the Swedish Diet elected him king. From the start of his reign, he showed his intention to subordinate the church to his own needs. Friction with the pope over the latter's interference in Swedish ecclesiastical affairs led to the discontinuance of any official connection between Sweden and the papacy from 1523. Short of resources, Gustavus turned to the wealth of the church, which he felt free to appropriate for the needs of his government. Meanwhile Lutheran doctrines had been making headway among the clergy and even affecting the king. At the Diet of Vsters in 1527, the king succeeded, by a threat of abdication, in forcing the diet to agree to laws that subjected the church in Sweden completely to the crown. The king was given possession of all church property, church appointments required royal approval, the clergy were subject to the civil law, and the "pure Word of God" was to be preached in the churches and taught in the schools. This meant that Lutheran ideas were given official sanction. The protestantizing of the church and the despoiling of church property by the king led to uprisings, but they were suppressed without bringing about any change in royal policy.

Except in Stockholm, the Swedish Reformation was not, on the whole, a popular

movement but was imposed from above. In return, the king's power was strengthened by it. Gustavus Vasa constantly and successfully strove to increase his power, tolerating no oppositions. In 1544, by the Act of Hereditary Settlement, the Swedish crown was made hereditary.

During the reign of Gustavus, who died in 1560, the reformation of the Swedish church continued. The leading reformer was Olavus Petri (Olof Petersson, 1493 1552), who had studied at the University of Wittenberg. In his preaching and writings, he was indefatigable in attacking the old church and setting forth Protestant teaching. His liturgical writings did much to influence the form of worship in the Swedish church, and he also produced a Swedish Mass and hymnal. It was significant for the future that he was not radical, but made considerable use of long-standing tradition, as well as leaning heavily on the work of German reformers, especially Luther. Though Gustavus Vasa furthered the development of the Reformed church, his rapacity in seizing church property and his determination to be complete master of the church caused friction with its leaders, including Petri. He was even denounced from the pulpit for his tyranny. Nevertheless, by the time he died, the Swedish church was irrevocably set in a Protestant direction, and it was to remain Protestant and Lutheran through various vicissitudes. In 1593, under a Roman Catholic king, a synod at Uppsala set the seal on the Swedish Reformation by making the Augsburg Confession the official confession of the national church.

DENMARK

Christian II acceded peacefully to the throne of Denmark and Norway in 1513, but, as in Sweden, he was forced out of power, in spite of great abilities and some constructive accomplishments. He was a hardworking monarch, solicitous of the welfare of his people. He worked to reform municipal government, suppress piracy, and foster Danish trade and the prosperity of Copenhagen. He established uniform weights and measures, abolished the death penalty for witchcraft, and devoted attention to education at all levels. He was also interested in ecclesiastical affairs. Christian even tried to get Martin Luther to Denmark, and in 1521 forbade the publication of the papal bull of excommunication of Luther. Yet he was not a Protestant and had no desire for a break with Rome; he did intend to control and reform the church. This is shown in his remarkable legal code, which included many provisions relating to church affairs. Among these were the following: appeals to Rome were forbidden, and the king and his council were to sit as a court of final appeal in spiritual cases; the jurisdiction of the bishops' courts was greatly reduced; and the clergy were forbidden to acquire land. Other regulations enforced on bishops the systematic performance of their duties and sought to secure a body of clergymen adequate to their tasks. No doctrinal alterations were contemplated, and even the prohibition of appeals to Rome was intended chiefly to check the flow of money from Denmark to the Curia.

This law code, embodying the ecclesiastical and secular measures that have been mentioned, roused a good deal of opposition, and it is not clear whether it ever went into effect. It was indeed one of the factors in his deposition. He had also antagonized the Danish nobles by favoring the peasants and the bishops, by executing some of their number in the Bloodbath of Stockholm, and by showing an interest in the followers of Luther. He had disregarded his coronation promises, he was at war with Lbeck, he was having troubles in Sweden, and he was on bad terms with his uncle, Duke Frederick of Schleswig-Holstein.

In 1522 nobles and bishops in Jutland conspired to depose Christian and to put his uncle Frederick on the throne. Disaffection spread, and Christian fled Denmark in 1523 with the plan to recruit an army abroad. In 1532 he mounted an invasion of southern Norway and made the mistake of trusting a safe-conduct from Frederick I. He was made prisoner, and remained in captivity until his death in 1559. Though Frederick promised at his coronation to persecute Lutherans, it was in his reign (1523-33) that the Catholic church was destroyed in Denmark. He soon adopted a policy of protecting Lutheran preachers and reformers, of whom the most famous was Hans Tausen. In 1527, when asked by the bishops to take steps which would re-emphasize the Catholic character of the church, Frederick replied that nobody was to be forced to renounce his faith, and that the king had power only over men's lives and property but not their souls. In practice, the policy of Frederick favored the spread of Lutheranism and the dissolution of the old church. From 1526 Danish bishops had their appointments confirmed by the king and never again sought papal confirmation. In several important cities, including Copenhagen, the reformers gained the upper hand. Throughout Denmark the monasteries gradually disappeared, and churches were destroyed with the king's permission. Schleswig and Holstein were ruled by the king's oldest son, Christian, a convinced Lutheran, who gave a great impetus to the Lutheran forces in his territories and influenced his father in the same direction.

It was, in fact, the known Lutheranism of Christian that prevented his election to the throne when his father died in 1533. On the council, which had the right of electing the king, the majority was Catholic, and, therefore, opposed his accession. The split in the council caused a decision to postpone the election, and this was followed by an invasion in favor of the imprisoned Christian II, led by a German prince who was a cousin of the deposed monarch. In the civil war that followed, Denmark was brought to the verge of dissolution before the final victory of Duke Christian, son of Frederick I, who received help from Gustavus Vasa. In 1537 he became Christian III. The accession of Christian was epoch-making for the reorganization of the Danish church. The new king was seriously in need of money, and it was natural that he should look for help to the bishops, who were the richest men in Denmark. When they proved recalcitrant, he had them arrested and imprisoned, and took possession of their property. All were eventually released except one who died in prison but their old positions were not restored to them. The king's action was widely applauded, because the bishops had been very unpopular.

To help in the continued reform of the church, Christian secured from the elector of Saxony the services of one of Luther's chief assistants and colleagues, Johann Bugenhagen, who came to Denmark in 1537. Bugenhagen crowned Christian and his queen, replacing the archbishop of Lund, who had traditionally performed that function. Later, Bugenhagen ordained seven Lutheran clergymen as superintendents to replace the deposed bishops. This was the first time that bishops had not been ordained by a regularly consecrated bishop, and it was a deliberate break with tradition: A bishop probably could have been found to perform the act. Bugenhagen became a professor of theology at the University of Copenhagen, which had been closed during the years of trouble and was opened again in 1537. It now had a new Protestant faculty, and one of its purposes was the education of the clergy.

In 1537 a new Church Ordinance was officially adopted. It was drawn up by a commission of clergymen appointed by the king and approved by Luther. In 1550 there appeared Christian III's Bible, the first complete translation into Danish. When the king died in 1559, the Protestant church in Denmark was established on firm foundations.

The Reformation in Denmark was more of a popular movement than in Sweden. This was not true in Norway and Iceland, dependencies of Denmark. Although there were reforming tendencies in both places, there was no popular movement, and the Reformation was imposed by force, especially in the reign of Christian III.



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CHAPTER 13

THE REFORMATION IN SWITZERLAND AND SOUTHERN GERMANY

SWITZERLAND

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Switzerland [See [Map](#)] was still nominally a part of the Holy Roman Empire. In fact, it was for all practical purposes wholly independent. Its constitutional structure was that of a loose confederation of thirteen cantons, which had evolved from an original nucleus of three. There was a diet, which represented all the cantons, but its decisions, to be binding, had to be unanimous; and it was left to each canton to enforce them. Thus each canton enjoyed a great deal of autonomy. Some cantons were rural; others were dominated by the flourishing cities whose names they bore, such as Basel, Bern, and Zurich.

The natural resources of the small, mountainous country were limited. To provide needed income, the Swiss had turned to the practice of training mercenary troops and hiring them out to foreign powers. There were patriots in Switzerland who strongly opposed this practice, seeing that it had a demoralizing effect both on the young men who became soldiers and on Swiss public life. The most conspicuous evil was the "pensions" or bribes paid to influential Swiss politicians to secure their continued acquiescence in the mercenary system. The condition of the pre-Reformation church and clergy in Switzerland was not unlike that which prevailed elsewhere. On the one hand, there was doctrinal orthodoxy and great devotion; on the other, anticlericalism, nurtured by the consciousness of abuses, including a clergy that was often ignorant and worldly, and sometimes immoral. Conflicts between secular and religious authority were not uncommon, because the laity resented and resisted the encroachment of the church in civil matters. The powers of the priesthood were more limited in Switzerland than in some other places, and the clergy was in general subject to the jurisdiction of the lay courts.

Zurich, where the Swiss Reformation began, was in touch with currents from the outside world. Besides being a center of trade and manufacture, it was much frequented by travelers and was the home of many foreign ambassadors. Its government was controlled by the guilds, of which all male citizens were members. The chief political authorities were the two councils, one of 50 and the other of 212; the larger was the highest authority

in the city. It had long exercised jurisdiction over the church and the clergy, and church property was taxable.

It was in a spot not far from Zurich that Ulrich Zwingli was born on January 1, 1484, only a few months after the birth of Luther. He was destined early for the priesthood, and was exposed to the influence of humanism, becoming a follower of Erasmus's ideas. At the University of Basel, where he received his degrees (bachelor's in 1504, master's two years later), he heard the theological teachings of Thomas Wyttenbach, whose ideas in some ways anticipated Luther's: He taught that the Bible was the supreme authority and that faith was the key to the remission of sins. Zwingli was ordained in 1506, and served from that year until 1516 as parish priest at Glarus. As an Erasmian, he devoted himself to Bible study and even learned Greek in order to be able to read the New Testament in the original. He also became an outspoken critic of the mercenary system and of the pensions that helped to perpetuate it. On this subject he acquired firsthand experience by serving as a chaplain with the troops of Glarus, which served in Italy on three different occasions. His views on the mercenary system aroused so much opposition that he moved to Einsiedeln, where, as he always claimed, he found the truth. He began preaching in a more evangelical manner and denouncing the failings of the church.



At the beginning of the year 1519, he began to preach in the cathedral of Zurich, to which he had been called. He immediately created a sensation by announcing a departure from the usual method. Instead of following the prescribed scriptural readings, he would preach straight through the Gospel of Matthew, and he would base his exposition exclusively on the Scriptures. He became famous and popular, but at the same time aroused strong conservative opposition. During his first years in Zurich, his own commitment to the teachings of the reformers deepened, partly through his avid readings of Luther's writings. Though he was impressed by Luther's works, he had been reaching his basic conclusions before this time, and he never acknowledged his reading of Luther as marking a turning point in his own spiritual evolution. From 1520 on he preached pure Reformation doctrine and was conscious of his mission as a reformer. Meanwhile, through his influence, Zurich withdrew from the traffic in mercenaries.

The Reformation in Zurich actually began in 1522. During Lent some members of Zwingli's congregation publicly ate meat and defended their behavior by appealing to his assertion that only the commands of the Bible were binding on the conscience. Zwingli had not personally taken part in the meat-eating, but he took the responsibility for it and defended it in writing. The bishop of Constance, whose diocese included Zurich, objected; but the city council supported Zwingli. In August the clergy of the city decided unanimously to preach nothing not found in the Bible.

In 1523 the city government arranged for two public disputations on controversial points of religion. The civil authorities were to hold the disputations, make the rules, and decide

which side had won. It was thus the state that took the lead in the introduction of the Reformation in Zurich. In decreeing that all points must be proved from the Bible, the council already revealed a certain bias in favor of Zwingli and his party. The same bias was apparent in the decisions of the council, which declared that Zwingli, the chief debater on the Reformed side, had not been refuted from the Bible, and that he and the other preachers should continue to teach only what was in the Scriptures. In essence this meant that Zurich had adopted the Reformation.

Zwingli's views, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, were to prove too radical for Luther. On the other hand, for some who had been his followers, they were to seem too conservative. These were the first so-called Anabaptists, who will be treated in Chapter 15. Zwingli, who believed in both infant baptism and a state church, became hopelessly alienated from this group. He was perhaps the most politically minded of the great reformers, and worked closely with the civic authorities in carrying out his program. During the next few years, the remaining Catholic elements in the religious life of Zurich were gradually removed, until, with the abolition of the Mass in 1525, the revolution was complete. The church service was drastically simplified, and even music was done away with completely, though Zwingli loved music and was himself an accomplished musician. All gold and silver ornamentation was removed from the churches. Public worship came to consist of prayers, public confession of sins, the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, and preaching. Services were held every day. From 1523, priests and nuns had been marrying; Zwingli himself married in 1524.

One of the casualties of the Reformation in Zurich was the friendship of Zwingli with his old idol Erasmus, who found the movement too radical for his taste. An additional source of ill-feeling was the help that Zwingli gave to Ulrich von Hutten in 1523. Hutten, a broken and dying man after his flight from Germany, had been turned away by Erasmus, then living in Basel, while Zwingli received him and gave him what help he could.

Zwingli was conscious of social problems, and devoted attention to efforts to deal with them. Through his work, serfdom was abolished, and poor relief was put under the supervision of the civil power. By laws of 1525, matrimonial cases came under the jurisdiction of the council, with divorce permitted in some instances. Zwingli was not satisfied to see the Gospel triumph in Zurich alone, but worked actively to promote its spread throughout the Confederation. His policy in this respect may fairly be called a kind of religious imperialism, because he favored the use of force to impose his religious ideas and came more and more to embrace the rightness of conquest for the sake of the faith. Both Basel and Bern came to embrace the reform in the 1520s. In Basel the leader of the movement was Johannes Oecolampadius, who became preacher in one of the churches in 1525. The city of Basel went over completely to the Protestant side in 1529; the change was accelerated by popular tumult that drove the city's most distinguished resident, Erasmus, to leave. Oecolampadius was a friend and fellow worker of Zwingli, whose theology he adopted, especially on the crucial issue of the Lord's Supper.

In Bern also the Reformed group steadily gained strength until by 1527 it had a majority in the two governing councils of the city. A public disputation was held in 1528 between Catholics and Reformers, in which one of the participants was Martin Bucer, leader of the Reformed preachers at Strasbourg. The outcome of the Bern Disputation was the adoption by the city of the Reformed religion. It also had effects in Strasbourg, where it helped to bring the final abolition of the Mass.

The work of Zwingli and his colleagues split the Confederation, because the rural or forest cantons Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Zug, and Lucerne remained Catholic. These Catholic cantons formed a league, which in 1529 made an alliance with Austria. Zurich, Bern, and some of the other Reformed cantons formed a league of their own; but, as a result of the Marburg Colloquy, they were less successful in obtaining help. They were joined, however, by Constance and Strasbourg, Reformed imperial free cities, which were not members of the Swiss Confederation. By this time, Zwingli, as the religious leader of much of Switzerland and southern Germany, was at the height of his influence. In 1529, Zurich, at the head of the Reformed league, declared war on the Catholic cantons. The Protestant forces far outnumbered their opponents, who failed to secure help from their Austrian allies. Actually this "war" hardly deserves the name, because it was over virtually before it started; the Catholics were in no position to put up a fight, and not a shot was fired. The terms of the treaty, The First Peace of Kappel of 1529, were very favorable to Protestants.

The Catholics gave up the Austrian alliance, the majority in each canton would decide its religion, and there was to be no persecution. Zwingli was not pleased at the outcome, because he recognized that the treaty was only a truce and that a resumption of fighting was inevitable.

His foresight was not shared by the Zurich authorities, who neglected to prepare for war. They were, therefore, taken by surprise when the forest cantons attacked in 1531. Zurich hastily assembled its troops, but its preparations were inadequate. Zwingli, who had accompanied the Protestant army in the earlier war, was present this time also as chief pastor or chaplain. The battle of Kappel was fought on October 11, 1531. The forces of Zurich were badly defeated; but, even more disastrous for their cause, Zwingli was killed. The Second Peace of Kappel (November 24, 1531) provided that each canton would manage its own religious affairs. The Protestant dream of conquering all of Switzerland was shattered. Although Zwingli's place in Zurich was taken by the able Heinrich Bullinger, who became a leading figure in the international Protestant movement, Zurich lost something of its previous position. Soon its influence in Switzerland would yield to that of the Frenchman John Calvin.

STRASBOURG AND WESTERN AND SOUTHERN GERMANY

The imperial free city of Strasbourg enjoyed a position of considerable importance by the start of the sixteenth century. Located on the upper Rhine and surrounded by fertile land, the city was a prosperous commercial center. In the Middle Ages, the citizens had carried on a successful campaign to free themselves from the government of their bishop. Tension between nobles and burghers had remained, until the latter became dominant partly by the use of force. Eventually a new nobility was formed, consisting of merchants and professional men whose standing was based on property rather than birth. This was the group who ruled the city before the Reformation, though some members of the old nobility continued active in civic affairs.

The constitutional development of the city had resulted in government by a complicated and confusing system of councils, which was not made more intelligible by the fact that the Council of Twenty-One actually had thirty-two members. For our purposes there are two salient facts to remember: The system was dominated by members of the guilds, and it somehow worked, giving Strasbourg a remarkably stable government.

The church was wealthy, holding much land and, therefore, having a large number of tenants. Many members of the clergy and many of the nuns were from rich or noble families and did not pay much attention to the religious needs of the citizens or indeed to their own. The clergy occupied a privileged status, which they did not appear to earn by any corresponding contribution to the life of the city, religious or financial. Thus conflicts between the clergy and the government were frequent. The outcome, over the centuries, had been the growth of the power of the city over the church.

The need for reform of the church was recognized by the humanists who made Strasbourg an important intellectual center. Such men as Sebastian Brant and Jacob Wimpheling combined scholarly interests with a keen desire for religious and educational renewal. In religion their aim was a restoration of traditional Christianity purged of abuses; they had no desire to explore new paths. In the field of education they wanted to combine humanistic training, which they valued highly, with moral and religious instruction.

A clear call for reform was issued by the renowned preacher Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg, for whom the position of preacher in the cathedral was created in 1478. Preaching to great crowds, he called on the people to amend their lives, on the rulers to provide a more Christian government for the city, and on the clergy to abandon worldliness. In spite of his efforts, nothing important was accomplished, and the clergy his special target continued in their unreformed habits.

Geiler, however, was just as conservative in his religious views as his friends Brant and Wimpheling. The Reformation came to Strasbourg from other directions. The religious leaders of the movement were parish priests: Capito, Hedio, Zell, and above all Martin Bucer. Wolfgang Capito, a well-known Hebrew scholar, came to Strasbourg in 1523 when

he was already about forty- five years old. Matthew Zell, who preached in a chapel of Strasbourg cathedral, was the first to preach the Reformed doctrines in the city; by 1521 he had gone over to the side of the Reformation. In spite of intense opposition an attempt was even made to assassinate him he received support from the city government and continued to preach. Caspar Hedio, who preached in the cathedral, was a friend and follower of Capito. He was also a humanistic scholar, translating Latin classics into German for the use of students. The greatest of the Strasbourg Reformers was Martin Bucer (1491 1551). He was an Alsatian by birth, who had reluctantly become a Dominican in order to receive an education that his family could not afford. In 1518 at Heidelberg, he heard Luther and as a result adopted his views. Consequently, he was later forced to flee the monastery and was able to get official permission to be a secular priest. Having married a nun, openly embraced the Reformation, and become excommunicated, he took refuge in 1523 in Strasbourg where, as the son of a citizen, he was entitled to the city's protection. Though the bishop of Strasbourg tried to have him expelled, Bucer was called by one of the churches to be its priest.

Other congregations asserted themselves similarly, appointing priests who preached the "Gospel," that is, the Reformed doctrines. This led to conflict with the ecclesiastical chapters in the city, which had, heretofore, made such appointments, so that the city government decided to take over the naming of the clergy. Since the governing authorities were at first split on the religious issue, the original initiative in the reform movement came from the evangelical preachers and the body of citizens. After a few years, the government did support the reformers, though sometimes hesitantly.

Not only the old ecclesiastical structure, but also much of society was altered in the following years. In 1523, begging was forbidden and the care of the poor was taken over by the city; in 1525 a poorhouse was established. The monasteries were also taken over by the city government, and most were closed by 1526. The magistrates assumed the duty of paying clerical salaries. Marriage of priests, though without official sanction, became accepted practice. In 1524, a Mass was celebrated in the cathedral with a revised liturgy; it was in German rather than Latin, and wine was given to the laity. In the same year congregational singing and sermons were introduced. In 1528, Bucer and Capito represented Strasbourg at the Bern Disputation, as a result of which Bern abolished the Mass. In the following year Strasbourg followed suit. The bishop protested strongly, and it was known that the emperor was opposed to the changes.

A serious problem in Strasbourg was that of the radicals, who are discussed in Chapter 15. More of their leaders visited Strasbourg than any other city. Both the leading Reformers and the civic authorities were more moderate and humane than their counterparts elsewhere. Bucer always opposed the death penalty for the radicals, and he and his colleagues originally welcomed them to the city. Their hospitality was not met by equal courtesy from the newcomers, who believed themselves in full possession of the truth, rejected the teachings of the reformers, and openly criticized them. Attempts by the

government to expel them proved futile.

Thus, threatened from without by imperial and Catholic hostility and from within by the presence of the radicals, Strasbourg felt compelled to organize its church and define its religious doctrines, and in 1533 a synod was held for this purpose. This body, whose membership was determined by the city council, had a majority of laymen, although the clergy were also present. Bucer prepared a set of articles, which the synod adopted. After some hesitation, the magistrates adopted an official doctrine for the city based on the articles and on the *Confessio Tetrapolitana*, a confession of faith presented to the Diet of Augsburg in 1530 in a futile attempt to satisfy both Lutherans and Zwinglians. The name, based on the Greek word for four, derives from the fact that Strasbourg and three other cities had drawn it up.

It was decreed that anyone who failed to accept the official statement of faith had to leave the city. As a result, the radicals finally departed. The enforcement of the doctrinal standard was confided not to the ministers, but to a lay committee. In this way, and in others, civic authorities established their own rule in the church, leaving little power to the clergy.

Bucer had an ideal of a godly Christian society jointly supervised by ministers and magistrates. Within the church he envisaged four kinds of officers: preachers, teachers, elders, and deacons. These officers would govern and discipline the lives of the people, with power to excommunicate in extreme cases. He was frustrated at home, because the government would not permit the establishment of his plan, but his ideas bore fruit in Geneva. From 1538 to 1541, the young John Calvin lived and worked in Strasbourg in close association with Bucer. He not only retained a lifelong gratitude and appreciation for the older man, but also learned much from him; and the establishment and spread of Calvin's church carried far and wide the ideas originally put forth by Bucer. One field in which the Strasbourg clergy did have some influence was that of education, in which they were vitally interested. They made many proposals for a new school system; and in 1526, as a result, a permanent school committee was set up, including members of the clergy together with men from the highest levels of the city government. By 1531 a complete school system was established, with instructions offered from the elementary to the university level.

In 1538 a new Gymnasium, or secondary school, was set up; and as its head a brilliant humanist, Johann Sturm, was hired. A friend of Erasmus and Melancthon, he made Strasbourg an important center of learning, and the school over which he presided was to become in 1621 the University of Strasbourg. Sturm's school provided the best example of a humanist school in Protestant territory.

Martin Bucer's work and importance extended far beyond the boundaries of Strasbourg.

His advice and help were sought in many parts of Germany in assisting with the establishment of Reformed churches, in settling disputes, and in recommending preachers. He was the most irenic and ecumenically minded of the great Reformers, and was active in seeking to promote unity among the Protestants and to reconcile Protestants and Catholics. He devoted himself with great energy and patience to the task of bringing together the Lutherans and Zwinglians in their controversy over the Last Supper, having come to the conclusion that the views of the two parties did not really conflict with each other. He was one of the moving spirits in bringing about the Marburg Colloquy in 1529, and was present at the meetings. In spite of the failure of the conference and a rebuff by Luther himself, Bucer refused to be discouraged. In the interests of concord he traveled widely, visiting cities and states; attending conferences, colloquies and diets; and talking to leaders on both sides.

The lot of the conciliator in an age of intolerance and ideological strife can be difficult, and Bucer found many times that his endeavors to bridge the gap between the factions earned him the suspicion and distrust of both. His ingenious efforts to find verbal formulas that would be mutually satisfactory were doomed to failure, because of the tenacity with which each side clung to its own interpretation of the Lord's Supper. The Zwinglians, especially after the death of their leader, proved even more intractable than Luther and his followers; indeed, Melanchthon became one of Bucer's allies.

One of Bucer's most important achievements as a mediator between the Protestant groups was the Wittenberg Concord of 1536, the result of a conference that took place in Luther's home. Bucer had invited representatives of the Reformed cities of southern Germany, which had adopted moderate Zwinglian views on the debated issues involving the Lord's Supper. The Swiss cities, identified with a more extreme Zwinglian position, were not represented. At the conference it proved possible for Melanchthon to draw up the so-called Concord, a theological summary including a statement on the Last Supper that both sides were able to accept. Complete unity was not established, but at least peace replaced strife. This state of affairs was attained at the price of some ambiguity.

The Concord brought about a split within the ranks of the Zwinglians. The moderate ones had now approached the Lutheran position, and in time went over entirely to Lutheranism. It was thus Bucer who more than anyone else brought almost all of Protestant southern Germany back to the Lutheran fold. He tried to bring the Swiss cities to accept the Concord, but failed. It was left to Calvin, in this as in other ways a follower of Bucer, to reach an accord with the Swiss.

Bucer also worked for a long time to reconcile Protestants with Catholics. In 1540 and 1541, a series of meetings took place in Germany in which the two sides attempted to reach a settlement. Bucer attended these meetings, and was in the forefront of those working for agreement. The first meeting took place at Haguenau in 1540. Later in the same year, a meeting was held at Worms, which ended early in 1541. In the spring of

1541, discussions were continued in connection with the Diet of Ratisbon (Regensburg). No settlement was accomplished at any of these conferences, but Bucer's attitude toward the Catholics was so conciliatory that it aroused objections among the Protestants. In 1546, another conference was held at Ratisbon, which Bucer attended, though this time without hope of any good result. The failure of this conference was followed in the same year by the outbreak of the Schmalkaldic War. The war, which Bucer had foreseen, affected him directly. The victory of Charles V at Mhlberg gave the emperor the upper hand in Germany. Within a short time, Strasbourg made a separate peace with Charles, withdrawing from the Schmalkaldic League, paying a large fine, and furnishing the emperor with weapons. Bucer was very unhappy with this settlement and with the actions of the Diet of Augsburg, which issued the Interim in 1548. Although Charles had tried to get Protestant help in arriving at a religious settlement including the help of Bucer, who attended the diet the Interim was so repugnant to Bucer that he resisted all attempts to get him to associate himself with it. In fact, he finally had to flee from Augsburg to escape arrest. Back in Strasbourg, he fought so hard to keep the Interim from being enforced in the city that the government was finally compelled, at the request of the emperor, to expel him. In April 1549, he went into exile.

His last years were spent in England, where he had been invited by Archbishop Cranmer, with whom he was on very friendly terms, and through whose help he was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University. He was treated with great consideration and honor; the young king, Edward VI, was friendly and helpful. Bucer was often consulted on the affairs of the English church, concerning which he became amazingly well-informed. He was even consulted on the revision of the Book of Common Prayer, and the 1552 version may reflect some of his suggestions.

On March 1, 1551, after less than two years in England, Bucer died. He was buried at Cambridge with great honor. In the reign of Mary, his remains were dug up and burned. In 1560, after Elizabeth had become queen, his memory was solemnly rehabilitated.

Bucer has been called one of the fathers of the Church of England, and his influence has been traced in the English Puritan tradition. He has also been referred to as the father of Calvinism. When one adds to this his other accomplishments, it is clear that Martin Bucer is one of the greatest figures in the Reformation. It is only in our own time that his reputation is catching up with his importance.



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CHAPTER 14

CALVIN AND GENEVA

John Calvin was born in the French cathedral town of Noyon in Picardy, in 1509; his name was Jean Cauvin. The familiar spelling of his last name is from the Latin form Calvinus. His father, Gerard Cauvin, was a lawyer who had close connections with the cathedral chapter. As a result, the young Calvin received church livings while he was still a boy, and this helped finance his education; furthermore, he started out to study theology. From about 1521, he was at the University of Paris, where he received his master's degree in 1528. At this point his plans were changed by his father, who had come into conflict with the church back at Noyon and as a result now ordered Calvin to turn to the study of law. He completed his legal education at the universities of Orlans and Bourges.

His chief interest in these years, however, was in classical letters, and the death of his father in 1531 set him free to pursue this study. He returned to Paris, and there in 1532 he published his first work, a commentary on the *De clementia* of Seneca. Calvin deals here with political ethics, a subject which interested him all his life.

By 1534 Calvin had embraced Protestantism, and as a result had to leave France. After a period during which he visited several cities, he came in 1536 to Geneva, where he expected to stay for only a short time. Geneva had just experienced the Reformation. The old church had been abolished and the rule of the bishop repudiated, but the new church had not been organized. The inhabitants of the city were a fun-loving lot, and much remained to be done in the field of public morals. The most active of the reformers of religion in Geneva was the fiery French preacher Guillaume Farel. Hearing of the arrival of Calvin, whom he knew by reputation, Farel came to him and urged him to remain and help in the reorganization and reform of religion. Calvin had no desire for this sort of work, and attempted to decline, but Farel called down the wrath of God upon him if he refused. Calvin was so frightened that he felt compelled to stay, although reluctantly.

Geneva at this time was allied with some of the Swiss cantons. For several centuries it had been ruled by its bishops and by the house of Savoy; indeed, after 1451 the bishops were always members of the house of Savoy. However, in Geneva as in other medieval cities, the desire for self-government had proved impossible to suppress. By 1387, the general assembly of the citizens had acquired the right to elect four syndics and four other

officials who were to have cognizance of criminal trials involving laymen. Over time there also grew up, three councils: a Little Council of twenty-five for administrative affairs; a Council of Sixty for diplomacy; and, after 1527, a Council of Two Hundred, which gradually replaced the Council of Sixty. Combined, these councils showed a strong hostility to the house of Savoy with its tendency to concentrate power in the hands of a small number of citizens. After 1530, the Little Council and the Two Hundred elected each other. The general assembly of all the people continued to function. In the decade before Calvin's arrival, Geneva had freed itself from its overlords. In 1526, the city concluded a military alliance with Freiburg and Bern. In 1533 and 1534, it declared itself free from the bishop, and then had to fight to defend itself from the attempts of the bishop and duke of Savoy to overthrow its newly won independence. With the help of Bern, it succeeded. By this time Bern had adopted the Reformation; and Geneva, under Bernese influence and primarily for political reasons, followed suit. The councils took over church property and the control of morals and religion. In February 1536, a comprehensive proclamation was issued for the regulation of moral and religious practices. It prohibited blasphemy and profanity; cards and dice; the protection of adulterers, thieves, vagabonds, and spendthrifts; excessive drinking; and all holidays except Sunday. All inhabitants were ordered to attend sermons, but the Mass and the Roman Catholic sacraments were forbidden. Thus a spirit of intolerance and of strict regulation of private conduct was firmly established before Calvin's arrival. In May 1536, the people of Geneva swore "to live according to the Gospel and the Word of God," and to establish universal primary education, which should be free to the poor.

Calvin began his work in Geneva as one of the ministers, and his genius for organization soon manifested itself. He drew up a catechism and a confession of faith, which were accepted by the city government. In 1537 there was some hint of difficulties to come, when many persons refused to accept the confession of faith. On the matter of church discipline, Calvin ran into more serious trouble. It was his aim to make the church autonomous in disciplinary matters. This involved, first of all, the right of the church to decide who was worthy to be admitted to partake of the Lord's Supper and who should be excluded in other words, the right to excommunicate. The councils had no intention of letting this important power pass into the hands of the ministers; they asserted that the councils alone had the right to settle such questions.

In 1538 the issue came to a head. First the councils voted that the Lord's Supper could not be refused to anyone who presented himself; that was, of course, contrary to the ideas of Calvin and Farel. In the elections of that year, magistrates were chosen who were opposed to Calvin and the ministers, and the same was true of the majority of members of the councils. The crisis came when the ministers were ordered to administer the Supper in the manner used at Bern, that is, with unleavened bread; the ministers preferred it leavened. The real issue, of course, was whether the church should be ruled by the councils or by the ministers. When the Sunday came for the communion service, Calvin refused to administer the sacrament at all, on the grounds that the people were not in the proper

mood and that, therefore, it would be a desecration of the sacrament if they received it. The upshot of it all was that Calvin and Farel were exiled.

At this time, Farel was still the most prominent of the pastors, and one of the political factions that had arisen in the city was named the Guillermins after him. The banishment of the two pastors was precipitated by the fact that the 1538 elections had gone against Farel's party; the pastors had proceeded to preach against the new government and, as a result, had been warned to stay out of politics. Thus it was a mixture of political and religious factors that led to the dismissal and banishment of Farel and Calvin.

Calvin left Geneva hoping never to see it again. He was invited to Strasbourg by Martin Bucer, and he spent most of the next three years there in work that was much more congenial to his tastes. He preached and directed the French church, besides teaching theology. He revised the order of public worship, introducing congregational singing and extemporaneous prayer and laying great stress on the sermon. He also did a good deal of writing. In 1540, he married Idelette de Bure, a widow with two children. Calvin had no children who survived, and his wife died in 1549.

In Geneva, factional struggles continued at a high pitch, aggravated by deteriorating relations with Bern. For a time, in fact, war threatened. Within the city, mob violence took place. The organization of the church had not made satisfactory progress, and public morals were still low. By 1540, the Guillermins were back in power. Farel, now in Neuchâtel, was invited to return, as was Calvin. Farel refused. Calvin abhorred the thought of going back to Geneva, which he referred to as a "cross" and a "torture chamber." Again, however, he yielded to what he became convinced was the will of God. In 1541 he left Strasbourg with tears in his eyes and returned to Geneva. There he was to live the rest of his life and to stamp the city for all time with his name. On his return to Geneva, Calvin was afforded an opportunity to put his ideas into effect in the ordering of the religious life of the city. He did not, however, have everything his own way. His Ecclesiastical Ordinances were subjected to revision by the councils before being adopted by the general assembly of all the citizens. Nevertheless, in their essentials they represent his ideas of the proper ecclesiastical polity and discipline. In the church there were to be four classes of officeholders: pastors, teachers, elders, and deacons. Candidates for the position of pastor must pass an examination with respect to both doctrine and moral character. They must be chosen by the ministers, presented for approval to the Little Council, and finally submitted to "the common consent of the company of the faithful."

Geneva was divided into three parishes. Throughout the week there were to be seventeen sermons held not only on Sunday but on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday as well. On Sunday at midday children were to be catechized in all three churches.

The work of the teachers, the second class of officeholders, was "the instruction of the

faithful in true doctrine." In providing for this office, Calvin showed his concern for proper education. The highest position among the teachers was to be held by two lecturers in theology, one in the Old Testament and one in the New. "But because it is only possible to profit from such lectures if first one is instructed in the languages and humanities," and for other reasons, a college should be set up to prepare children for the ministry and for civil government. It was many years, however, before an effective educational system was established in Geneva.

As for the elders, "their office is to have oversight of the life of everyone." There were to be twelve of them, chosen from the members of the three councils, "to keep an eye on everybody." They were to form the Consistory, which would be joined by the ministers and which was to meet weekly. This was the body that exercised disciplinary authority in the church. It had no power to impose any other penalties than purely ecclesiastical ones, the most severe being excommunication, which was to be invoked only after private admonition had failed. For temporal punishment the Consistory had to turn the case over to the councils. Even in the matter of excommunication, as it turned out, the Consistory was for many years restricted by the councils, and was not really free until 1555.

The Consistory has generally been associated with Calvin and regarded as his instrument for the tyrannical supervision of the lives of the people of Geneva. This characterization is not altogether just. It is no doubt true that Calvin regarded the regulation of private life and morality as a legitimate sphere for the activity of the church, but he was in no way unique. There had been regulation of private morality, both in Geneva and elsewhere before Calvin's time, and even after the establishment of the Consistory the greatest severity was that of the councils.

The work of the deacons was to administer funds for the poor and the sick and to look after the maintenance of the public hospital. Provision was also made for medical care for the poor in their own homes. Begging was strictly forbidden. A hospital recently established for travelers passing through the town was also to be maintained. There was a separate hospital for the plague.

In the thought of Calvin, state and church were distinct, but each in its proper sphere was to cooperate with the other in their great common purpose: to serve and glorify God. By the end of his career he had achieved a complete dominance of Geneva, which makes it possible for us to see what his full program was. All inhabitants had to renounce the Roman faith on penalty of expulsion from the city. Nobody could possess images, crucifixes or other articles associated with the Roman worship. Fasting was prohibited, together with vows, pilgrimages, prayers for the dead, and prayers in Latin. Nobody could say anything good about the pope. It was forbidden to give non-Biblical names to children. In 1555, a man who had been found lighting a candle before the body of his dead child was called before the Consistory.

Attendance at sermons was compulsory. In addition, one had to arrive on time, remain, and pay attention. In 1547, a man who left during the sermon and made too much noise about it was imprisoned. From 1545, there were domiciliary visits, which were put on a regular semiannual basis in 1550. The homes of the citizens were visited in order to ascertain the state of the family's morals. A great many spies were maintained, to report on matters of conduct and behavior. Dramatic performances were suppressed, except for plays given by schoolboys. Sexual immorality was frequently practiced and frequently chastised. One of the offenses considered particularly serious was criticism of the ministers and especially Calvin.

From 1546, cards and dice were forbidden. There were to be no taverns; instead, places were provided for eating and drinking, in which pious behavior would be encouraged. In these nurseries of righteousness, a Bible in French was to be displayed, religious conversation encouraged, and excessive drinking, indecent songs, cursing, cards, dice, and dancing forbidden. They were to close at nine in the evening. This experiment lasted three months, during which people did not come to these places, and then the taverns were opened once more. It was many years before all these regulations were put into effect; as a matter of fact, opposition to Calvin was quite serious for several years after his return in 1541. His opponents were not necessarily wicked and immoral, although there were persons of that description among them. There were very strong political motives impelling hostility to his regime. The foreign refugees who poured into the city and strongly supported Calvin appeared as a threat to the native citizens. Though there were some who disagreed with Calvin's doctrines, his enemies were not Catholics but supporters of the Reformation. Some of them were members of prominent Geneva families, who defied Calvin's strict moral regulations, possibly under the erroneous impression that their social status would protect them.

The most serious aspect of the situation, from Calvin's point of view, was that his enemies were gaining seats in the councils and were being elected as syndics. There was friction between Calvin and the councils, which also took over more and more control of church affairs. In 1553 his opponents secured a majority in the council and tried to deprive the Consistory of the power to excommunicate. Calvin's courageous resistance to this attempt helped to turn the tide in his favor, and the year 1553 marks the turning point in the struggle with his enemies.

This same year saw the trial and death of Michael Servetus, which helped to strengthen Calvin's hold on the city. Servetus is the most famous, though not the first, of the opponents of Calvin whose conflict with him was based on theological grounds. An earlier one was Sebastian Castellio, who will be discussed later. There was also Jerome Bolsec, who ventured to deny the doctrine of predestination and was banished in 1551. Had it not been for restraining opinions from other cities, Bolsec might have been executed. There were many at the time, in Geneva and elsewhere, who held the opinion that men ought not to die for their views on even so vital a topic as predestination. In fact,

this reaction was so strong that in 1552 when a man named Troillet contradicted the same doctrine, the council refused to punish him, in spite of Calvin's feelings in the matter. The two men were later reconciled.

The fate of Servetus was more harsh. Michael Servetus was born in 1511 in Spain, of a noble family. As a student at the French University of Toulouse, he became deeply interested in the Bible. Being a Spaniard, he was naturally concerned with the question of the conversion of the Jews and Mohammedans to Christianity. The great obstacle was the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, which to Jews and Moslems smacked of polytheism. In his studies at Toulouse, Servetus became convinced that the Bible contains no support for this doctrine, which he, therefore, decided was erroneous.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the radicalism or the danger of such a position in the sixteenth century. On this issue there was no controversy between the Church of Rome and the founders of the great Reformed churches: Luther, Zwingli, Calvin. All held to the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity as basic to their conceptions of the Christian faith. To deny the divinity of Christ was considered one of the worst of all heresies.

In 1531 Servetus published his book *De Trinitatis Erroribus* (On the Errors of the Trinity), which aroused opposition in all quarters. The two Protestant cities of Basel and Strasbourg, in both of which Servetus had lived, forbade the sale of the book. Luther and Melancthon were opposed to it, and the Catholics were no less antagonistic. Jerome Aleander called it "nauseating." The Spanish Inquisition tried to lure him back to Spain for trial but failed. The Inquisition in Toulouse included his name in a decree of 1532 among forty persons who were to be apprehended.

Thus he was a marked man, in danger from both Protestants and Catholics. For a long time he lived in France under an assumed name and engaged in a variety of activities, including the study and practice of medicine. He knew something of the circulation of the blood and is thus a precursor of William Harvey. He lectured on geography and astrology. He did editorial work for a printing firm, in which capacity he expressed dangerous opinions; for instance, he emphasized the historical sense of Old Testament passages in place of their customary interpretation as containing references to Christ. During most of his time in France, about a dozen years from the early 1540s to 1553, Servetus lived and worked in Vienne, a suburb of Lyon, both as an editor and as a physician. He was unable to keep silent, however, on the great religious questions that agitated him, and so he began work on a book to be entitled the *Christianismi Restitutio* (Restitution of Christianity). This work, while containing a restatement of his earlier views, also shows the new influences of Neoplatonism and Anabaptism. Some of his statements seemed pantheistic and his condemnation of infant baptism was very strong. During the writing of the *Restitutio*, in 1546 and 1547, Servetus carried on a correspondence with Calvin, which served to reveal the great differences between them. It roused the bitter hatred of Calvin,

who not only objected to the unorthodox views of Servetus but who also was probably enraged by Servetus's tone of superiority not unmixed with personal abuse. Servetus opposed Calvin's views on the Trinity, justification by faith, the depravity of man, and infant baptism. When Calvin sent him a copy of the *Institutes*, Servetus returned it with insulting criticisms. He also sent Calvin a part of his *Restitutio*, which Calvin kept along with the letters Servetus had sent him. Eventually Calvin broke off the correspondence. He wrote Farel that if Servetus came to Geneva, he would try to keep him from getting out of the city alive.

Servetus was able to find a publisher for his book at Vienne; it was printed in great secrecy, with no indication of the identity of the author or printer, except for the initials M. S.V. (Michael Servetus Villanovanus). The thirty letters Servetus had written to Calvin were incorporated in the volume, which appeared early in 1553. Some copies were sent to Geneva. In February, a French refugee of Geneva, Guillaume Trie, wrote a letter to a Catholic cousin at Lyon who had tried to win him back to the old faith and had reproached Geneva for lack of ecclesiastical discipline and order. In writing to his Catholic cousin, the Protestant turned his reproach against him by pointing out that in Lyon a dangerous heretic, Servetus, was allowed to live and print blasphemous books. He enclosed some leaves from Servetus's book.

This led to the questioning of Servetus by the Inquisition, but this questioning revealed nothing. In order to get evidence, a letter was sent to Trie in Geneva, who in reply sent several sheets in Servetus's handwriting, which had been in Calvin's possession and which, he said, he had obtained from Calvin only with difficulty. Calvin is thus seen to have supplied material to the Inquisition for the purpose of trapping Servetus. Later he denied having any part in this. Early in April Servetus was arrested, examined, and imprisoned. A couple of days later he escaped. He was tried in absentia and burned in effigy.

In August, he appeared in Geneva on his way to Italy. Here he was recognized, and the news of his presence was conveyed to Calvin, who had him arrested. On the basis of charges preferred by Calvin, Servetus was put on trial. The trial was carried on by the civil authorities, but the accusations were all based on Servetus's writings and theology. Much of the proceedings consisted of direct encounters between Servetus and Calvin himself, during which Calvin was not always fair or just. The same can be said of the civil authorities, who refused Servetus's request for counsel and kept him imprisoned under filthy and uncomfortable conditions.

On October 26, he was condemned to death for decrying the doctrine of the Trinity and infant baptism in other words, as a heretic. This means that he was to be burned at the stake. Calvin tried to get the sentence changed to death by the sword, but failed. On his way to the stake, Servetus was privileged to enjoy the company of Farel, who was in Geneva at the time. Servetus was bound to the stake and the fire was lighted. According to

some accounts, the wood did not burn quickly, and he suffered horrible agonies. Before he died, he cried out, "O Jesus, Son of the Eternal God, have pity on me!" Thus in his last moments of suffering he witnessed to his convictions, refusing to recognize the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity by applying the adjective "Eternal" to Jesus.

This combination of civil and ecclesiastical authorities, of Catholics and Protestants, in hounding to death one radical thinker is generally agreed to be one of the unloveliest episodes in the history of the Reformation. It did not go uncondemned even in its own day. In fact, it aroused so much opposition that Calvin felt compelled to issue a defense in both Latin and French versions in 1554; here he argued for the right to put to death those who dishonored God by teaching false doctrine.

In 1554, at Basel, there was published a work entitled *Concerning Heretics, Whether They Are to Be Persecuted*. The author's name was given as Martin Bellius. His real name was Sebastian Castellio, and his book makes him one of the most illustrious defenders of the idea of religious toleration. Castellio, a native of Savoy, was an accomplished scholar who had been a follower of Calvin and for a time the head of the school at Geneva. His desire to become a minister in the city was thwarted, however, because of his disagreement with Calvin on points of Biblical and doctrinal interpretation. From Geneva he went to Basel, where, among other things, he published his own Latin and French translations of the Bible, each with a dedication containing a plea for religious liberty. He pointed out that in religion it is so difficult to be certain of knowing the truth that, in persecuting religious dissenters, there is a danger of destroying the innocent with the guilty. Many prophets and apostles, thousands of martyrs, and even the Son of God have been put to death under color of religion, and the world today is no better or wiser or more clear-seeing than it has been in the past. To use earthly weapons for the sake of religion is far from the teaching of Christ who commanded us to turn the other cheek and return good for evil.

In 1553 he was appointed professor of Greek at the University of Basel. In the same year Servetus was burned at the stake, and Castellio published his work on the persecuting of heretics, in both Latin and French versions. It consisted of a number of passages from the works of the church fathers and modern writers including Calvin against persecution. There were also passages by Martin Bellius, George Kleinberg, and Basil Montfort, all of whom were no doubt Castellio himself. He brings out vividly the idea that purity of life is more important than the doctrinal orthodoxy for a Christian, and that it is a horrible thing for men to kill each other over doctrinal points in the name of Christ, who commanded them to love each other. Meanwhile, he finds that no attention is being paid to the charity and holiness enjoined on Christians, but that instead of this men are fighting over such matters as the Trinity, predestination, free will, "and other similar things, which it is not greatly necessary to know to acquire salvation by faith." If anybody takes the commands of Christ seriously and tries to lead a pure Christian life, all the others rise against him with one consent and destroy him. And, worst of all, they cover all this with the robe of Christ and claim to be serving His will by these cruelties.

Theodore Beza, Calvin's friend and later successor, wrote an answer to Castellio which attempted to prove that the magistrates have the duty of punishing heretics, and may put them to death. To this Castellio paid no particular attention, though he wrote a book against Calvin's defense of the execution of Servetus. Castellio's freedom of expression was somewhat curtailed thereafter, but he lived on in Basel until his death in 1563.

The execution of Servetus helped to solidify Calvin's hold on Geneva. In 1555, his friends were victorious in the elections, and a riot gave an excuse for crushing his enemies, some of whom fled while others were put to death. From 1555 to his death in 1564, Calvin was supreme in the city. Not only in the church but also in the state was his influence dominant; the councils treated him with great reverence and respect, granted his requests, and consulted him on matters of public policy. In 1559 he was asked to accept citizenship in Geneva, which he had previously refrained from doing to avoid the appearance of self-seeking. One of the most significant signs of his victory was that the right of excommunication was acknowledged to belong to the Consistory. This was something that Calvin had wanted since his first appearance in Geneva; until this time, however, the council had always insisted on taking part. From now on, the Consistory received the wholehearted cooperation of the civil authorities and the full Calvinist regime, as described earlier, was imposed on the citizens. Regulations were made more strict: For example, ministers were to have their dwellings throughout the city, in order to watch over vice more effectively. In 1558, edicts were issued that closely regulated clothing and food, to repress the extravagance that had prevailed in these areas. In 1561, the Ecclesiastical Ordinances of the Church of Geneva of 1541 were revised in such a way as to conform more closely to Calvin's wishes. The press was censored by the ministers. Crosses that remained on the church spires were removed. The number of excommunications rose. There had been eighty in the four years from 1551-54; in 1555 there were nearly a hundred; in 1556, the number reached one hundred forty; and in 1559 over three hundred were excommunicated. Another result of Calvin's ascendancy after 1555 was the greater hospitality of Geneva toward refugees. In earlier years, as we have seen, there had been resentment of their growing numbers and influence, and it had not been easy for them to become citizens. Now they were welcomed, and by 1557 the immigrant citizens considerably outnumbered those who were natives.

One of the great achievements of Calvin's last years was the founding of an academy at Geneva in 1559. Calvin's high regard for the importance of good education is shown in his provision for a special rank of teachers in his church in the Ecclesiastical Ordinances of 1541. However, his educational plans were not fully realized, despite his constant efforts, for eighteen years. Since the council could not supply money out of public revenues to build the new building he wanted, he raised funds by soliciting gifts and legacies from private individuals. Calvin modeled his school on the famous one at Strasbourg developed by the humanist Johann Sturm, where Calvin himself had lectured. In accordance with this model, the school at Geneva consisted of two parts: the college (*schola privata*), and the

academy itself (*schola publica*), which was a university, devoted chiefly to training ministers. Work in law and medicine was contemplated, but not actually offered during Calvin's lifetime.

The training in the college was specifically humanistic. The pupils were thoroughly grounded in reading the Greek and Latin classics, and in speaking and writing good Latin. Attention was paid also to religious instruction. The teachers were charged with seeing that the students learned to love God and hate vice. Students in the higher school, or academy, were generally free from this discipline, although they had to subscribe to the confession of faith to be admitted. The humanist influence remained strong in the academy, which had professors of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. Theodore Beza, who had just come from Lausanne, was made first rector, or head, of the new establishment. The school was a great success. It started with 162 pupils, mostly French, and in about six years it had ten times as many, with students from all over Europe.

Calvin's activities, in fact, were by no means circumscribed by the boundaries of Geneva. He was very eager for Protestant unity. As far as the Lutherans were concerned, he failed, in spite of his close friendship with Melancthon. Unfortunately, it was Melancthon's Lutheran opponents, who were far less conciliatory, who got the upper hand, and the result was a permanent split between the Lutheran and the Reformed churches. Calvin was more successful in Switzerland; in 1549 he and Bullinger, the successor of Zwingli, reached agreement, embodied in the Zurich Consensus, which in time was accepted throughout Protestant Switzerland.

Geneva also became the center of a great missionary activity. One reason for the founding of the academy was a desire to send out pastors to other countries. Many requests came from France, and so many ministers were sent there that in 1561 the French king, Charles IX, protested in a letter to Geneva, accusing these preachers of causing religious disturbance and inciting sedition. Calvin's widespread correspondence attempted to influence governments in favor of his cause. In England he wrote to the young Edward VI, to Somerset, and to Cranmer. He failed to ingratiate himself with Queen Elizabeth, who associated him with John Knox. He dedicated works to the kings of Denmark and Sweden. He remonstrated unsuccessfully with Henry II of France over the latter's persecution of the Huguenots. In 1561, Beza represented him at the Colloquy of Poissy.

Calvin died on May 27, 1564, to the great sorrow of the councils, the ministers and the people of Geneva. He was then, and has remained, the object of great admiration and intense devotion on the one hand, of bitter dislike and even hatred on the other. One fault that Calvin himself admitted and deplored was his violent temper. Toward those who disagreed with him he could express himself with the bitter vituperation that was characteristic of controversy in his day. He was extremely sensitive to any personal criticism or any sign of disrespect. After he had gained ascendancy in Geneva, the citizens were punished or reprimanded for criticizing his preaching or even for greeting him

without calling him "Master." He displayed a vindictiveness toward his enemies, which did not rest until they were crushed and humiliated.

His devotion to what he conceived to be his mission was heroic. He accomplished in his lifetime a stupendous quantity of work. Although harassed with countless practical cares, he wrote and revised several times his masterpiece, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. He published commentaries on every book of the New Testament except the Apocalypse, and on several books of the Old Testament. He wrote many other works of theology, of religious instruction, of controversy. He wrote thousands of letters. Every week he regularly gave three lectures on theology and preached several times. He was the leading figure in the Consistory, and generally gave an address every Friday at the regular meeting of the Company of Pastors, of which he was moderator, or presiding officer. This amazing activity was not the work of a man bursting with health and energy. From his thirties, he was plagued with a variety of illnesses, and only an indomitable will enabled him to go on working under all conditions. His numerous ills no doubt contributed to his bad temper, as Beza said. He did not use his ill health as an excuse to spare himself: He slept little and took little recreation. He completed his final edition of the *Institutes* while sick and not sure that he would survive. Even during his last illness he continued to work. He lived very simply. His salary was not large, and he gave away in charity much of what he did receive. He refused additional sums of money offered by the council. Like Luther, he did not benefit financially from his writings. He was known for his hospitality in entertaining visitors to Geneva. At his death, he left very little money or property. In appearance, he was slight and frail. In temperament, he was basically timid and reserved, and like other men of this sort, he did not show the softer or more informal side of his nature to many people. Nevertheless, such a side did exist.

He considered himself to be tenderhearted. To be reproached by a friend, as he once was by Bucer, agitated him and kept him awake at night. To his friends he could be kind and affectionate, taking a deep personal interest and helping them in their affairs. He found servants, jobs, and wives for friends who needed any of these. He enjoyed laughter and was a witty conversationalist. He responded to the beauty of nature and the pleasures of the countryside, feeling that these were God's gifts and that men should accept them gratefully and enjoy them. His marriage was happy, and his grief at the death of his wife was profound. It has been suggested by some scholars that the sweeter side of Calvin's nature is more apparent in his youth, and that as time passed the sterner features became ascendant.

Perhaps some of the qualities of the man are reflected in his theology. No account of Calvin would be adequate without some discussion of his theology. It may be conveniently summarized by following the order of topics in the last edition of the *Institutes*.

In writing the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin produced a systematic,

comprehensive, and lucid statement of Christian theology. The first edition in Latin was published in 1536, and later Calvin produced a French version. He continued to revise and enlarge the book until a few years before his death; the final Latin version appeared in 1559. In its impact on its age and later ages, Calvin's Institutes must be considered one of the most significant books of the sixteenth century. He begins by emphasizing the greatness and goodness of God and the depravity of man. Men should submit to Him and trust His paternal care. Everywhere we look, there are signs of God's glory. To these, because we need a better help to direct us to Him, He has added the light of His Word. The most important proof that God is the author of Scripture is the testimony of the Spirit in our hearts.

Original sin, which is explained in Book II, Calvin defines as a hereditary corruption of man's nature, which renders us worthy of God's wrath. Our nature is not only destitute of all good, but also ceaselessly fertile in all evils. As a result of the Fall, man's will is no longer free but in bondage to sin. Only divine grace can change the will from bad to good and perform good works in us. Grace is given only to the elect, and purely gratuitously, not because of man's merits or works. Calvin's doctrine of Christ follows traditional orthodoxy. Christ became man for our sakes, possessed the nature of God and the nature of man, overcame death for us, and opened the way to the kingdom of Heaven. Book III deals with the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing grace to men. Faith is the chief work of the Spirit. Calvin follows Luther on justification by faith. Man is justified by faith through the righteousness of Christ, and we must not have confidence in works, because they cannot justify us in the eyes of God.

It is also in Book III that Calvin takes up the crucial doctrine of predestination, by which every man is chosen for either eternal life or eternal death. Election that is, being chosen for salvation does not depend on merit; it is a purely gratuitous gift of divine grace. According to Calvin, this doctrine does not, as many assert, diminish the need for moral exhortation and a good life. Since we do not know who is predestined, we must desire and work for the salvation of all, leaving the rest to God. Book IV, the final book of the Institutes, deals with the church. In the church the Gospel is preached and the sacraments administered, both for our faith. Outside the church there is no salvation. The pope's church is not a true church but the kingdom of Antichrist. Calvin devotes several chapters to an attack on the papacy.

As for the sacraments, Calvin accepts baptism and the Eucharist. Like the other Reformers, he defends infant baptism, though he denies that baptism is necessary for salvation. In discussing the Lord's Supper, he rejects the Real Presence in both the Catholic and Lutheran forms, but maintains that, by faith, we actually partake of the real body of Christ.

The Institutes conclude with a long chapter on civil government. Christian liberty does

not, as some contend, mean throwing off the restraints of civil government, which, in the present state of things, is one of the necessities of man. Magistrates have their offices from God, and they are His vicegerents. Their calling is the most sacred and honorable of all. Calvin, who shared the distrust of monarchy held by some of his most distinguished contemporaries, prefers either aristocracy or a mixture of aristocracy and democracy. No one polity is suitable for all countries.

Magistrates must be obeyed, honored, and esteemed. But what if they abuse their authority? This brings up the question of obedience to tyrants. Calvin's answer is that tyrants must be obeyed in the same way as good rulers, because they are sent by God to punish the iniquity of the people. Sometimes God raises up some of His servants as public avengers to deliver His people from oppression. Private persons may not undertake vengeance on wicked rulers, but there may be magistrates whose duty is the protection of the people and the moderation of the power of kings. Among these are the assemblies of estates of the various kingdoms.

But obedience to earthly authority must never be allowed to divert us from our supreme allegiance to God. When the magistrates command anything against God, we should pay no attention to it or have any regard to the dignity of magistrates. This may subject us to great danger by exposing us to the wrath of kings, but we should suffer anything rather than deviate from piety. As Peter says, "we ought to obey God rather than men." In Calvin's theology there are ideas that no doubt contained important implications for political thought and action. For him, man lived directly under the command of Almighty God for the purpose of doing His will. Servants of such a Master were not likely to be unduly impressed or overawed by the trappings of mere human power; thus there was something in the constitution of devoted Calvinists that equipped them to defy their rulers when the latter oppressed them. The Calvinistic consciousness of being among the elect armed its possessors with a formidable courage and determination. The history of Calvinism has proved that the armies of the saints, especially when well disciplined and equipped with good weapons, are likely to be well-nigh invincible. Not all of these developments are explicitly provided for in Calvin's thought, but they all proceeded logically from it under the influence of actual historical crises.

An issue that has been much discussed is the relationship between Calvinism and capitalism. The relationship was first postulated by Max Weber in his famous work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, first published in 1904-05. Weber found in the capitalistic spirit a duty of the individual to increase this capital, as an end in itself. The summum bonum of this outlook was earning more and more money while avoiding pleasure. Weber finds in Calvinism an important contributing factor in the development of this point of view. According to him, the Calvinists, intensely eager to achieve assurance of salvation, came to the conclusion that this assurance could be best attained through intense worldly activity and a life of good works; thus the believer carried out his true function of glorifying God. Each individual should work incessantly in his own calling.

This is a type of worldly asceticism. In practice, private profit came to be considered a sign of a good life, wealth was seen as a result of God's favor, and a sanction was found for the zealous pursuit of profit for the glory of God.

Weber, to be sure, deals with Calvinism rather than with Calvin. Nevertheless, the effect of his ideas was to give to many persons a picture of Calvin as somehow blessing the single-minded acquisition of wealth. This notion is a complete falsification of Calvin's thinking. As far as he was concerned, either riches or poverty might come from God to the faithful, and either one was to be accepted as God's will. Indeed, prosperity was a danger, because it might seduce the soul from God, and the wicked might in this world be more prosperous than the righteous. But since this world is for the believer not his home but a place of exile, its conditions are not of primary importance.

Much has also been made of the fact that Calvin sanctioned, under certain circumstances, the taking of interest, contrary to the Catholics and Luther. In practice, Calvin hardly departs at all on this point from Luther or Thomas Aquinas. He believed in a moderate interest rate not more than 5 percent and insisted on certain other conditions: Interest must not be taken from the poor; the transaction must be carried out on an equitable basis; it must serve the public good; and both borrower and lender must benefit. It is probably true that Calvin was somewhat less conservative than Luther, who never got over his German peasant outlook. Calvin, perhaps because of his urban background and environment, was less antagonistic to business, and recognized that in his day it was not possible to do business without the use of interest. He denied that the Bible contained an absolute prohibition of interest. He also denied the common theory of the Middle Ages that money is barren. Perhaps it may be said that Calvin merely went a bit further in justifying in theory what was being widely done already in practice.

It is quite untrue that Calvin was opposed to all pleasures. The view that would make him out as a grim ascetic is an error. He did work hard though he never made much money; his followers worked hard, and some of them, not surprisingly, did make money. This was not Calvin's primary purpose; if his followers were faithful to his teachings, it was not their primary purpose either.

Whatever Calvin's chief importance was, it was not economic. There is no short way of describing his influence, which has been and is immense and pervasive, but it might be possible to summarize one aspect of it by saying that for Calvin and his followers, human life was exalted and hallowed by the sense that it was lived under God's judgment. No act, no word, no thought or impulse was indifferent; an account must be rendered for all of them to the great Taskmaster whose eye is always upon each one of His servants.



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CHAPTER 15

THE RADICALS OF THE REFORMATION

In recent years much has been written about the "left wing of the Reformation" or the "Radical Reformation." These terms refer to those individuals and groups who rejected both the Roman Catholic tradition and the Protestant alternatives to it, in the name of what they considered true or apostolic Christianity. As a result, they were persecuted by Catholics and Protestants alike and their ideas and lives were bitterly attacked, often without a genuine knowledge of what they stood for. The attacks of their opponents were given wide currency, while their own statements about themselves were ignored or suppressed, so that for centuries little accurate knowledge was available. Only in recent decades has the balance been rectified by the work of scholars who have uncovered the basic documents and subjected these documents to objective scrutiny. It is now clear that the importance of the radicals was great and that the Reformation cannot be understood without them.

For the sake of clarity, the term Protestant will not be applied to these groups, but will be reserved for the followers of Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and the other founders of churches that in one country or another received official sanction. One characteristic of the radicals some scholars see it as their essential distinction is the rejection of any connection with the state. For the rest, it is difficult to reach any general definition because of the great variations within the movement. We will follow the common classification that divides the left wing into three main tendencies: the Anabaptists, the Spiritualists, and the Evangelical Rationalists.

THE ANABAPTISTS

The word Anabaptists means literally rebaptizers, and it was employed by contemporary enemies of the radicals, and by later generations as well, to describe the entire left-wing movement. It is, for several reasons, an unfortunate and misleading term. Strictly speaking, none of the religious groups of the Reformation period believed in rebaptizing; many advocated adult baptism, or believers' baptism, convinced that infant baptism was invalid. They, therefore, claimed that the true baptism was not a rebaptism but the only one. Furthermore, though believers' baptism was important to them, it was not the central point in their faith, and it is inaccurate to name them after it. It was convenient for their

enemies to call them rebaptizers because this made them liable to prosecution under a provision of the Code of Justinian, originally used against the Donatists, making it a capital offense to rebaptize or deny the Trinity.

The origin and the distinctive characteristics of the Anabaptists are still debated topics. Some scholars emphasize their doctrine of the church. Unlike the Catholics and the chief Protestant groups, which all believed in territorial churches closely connected with the state, the Anabaptists believed in a gathered or voluntary church. In a territorial church, membership was compulsory for all persons living in the area where the church was established, and the civil authorities cooperated with the church in imposing ecclesiastical discipline. For the Anabaptists, the church was a body of the saints, membership was voluntary, and discipline was administered by the church. The most severe form of this discipline was the ban, whereby the erring member was to be completely cut off from any dealings with the faithful and absolutely shunned by them.

In their separation from the world, many Anabaptist groups refused to serve the state as magistrates or as soldiers, and some refused to pay war taxes, though in all other ways they believed in being obedient subjects. However, they denied that the state had any right to interfere in the internal affairs of the church. They believed themselves to be following the pattern of the Apostles and looked upon their contemporaries with some spiritual arrogance, so sure were they that the truth resided exclusively in their own keeping. There were also plentiful quarrels and conflicts among the Anabaptist groups themselves. Their belief in separation of church and state led naturally to the idea of religious toleration, and some of their leaders spoke eloquently in defense of this principle, but some of them displayed small tolerance for those who disagreed with them.

Some modern scholars, particularly those whose religious affiliations make them the spiritual descendants of the Anabaptists, find the essence of Anabaptism in the idea of discipleship. Certainly this was one of their main themes; they took literally the Bible commands, including the injunction to go into the world and preach the Gospel.

Hostile contemporaries, including Luther, regarded the Anabaptists as violent revolutionaries, deriving their origins from such men as Müntzer, Carlstadt, and the "Zwickau prophets." The disorders of the Peasants' Revolt and later at Münster (to be discussed later) seemed to confirm these suspicions, which were later given literary form in the writings of Bullinger, Zwingli's successor at Zurich. Some modern writers agree that there was indeed a violent strain from these sources in the early days of the movement.

Others emphasize the peaceful character of most of the Anabaptists, and trace their origins to events in and around Zurich. Among the early followers of Zwingli in that city, there were men who felt as time went on that the reformer was betraying his earlier views by his willingness to submit to the civil authorities in matters of religion and to accept the idea of

a state church. The Second Zurich Disputation in October 1523 helped to bring the final break, and by the following summer there was a party in Zurich that was opposed to him.



Its earliest leader was Conrad Grebel, called "the first Anabaptist." He came from a family of the lesser nobility, which formed part of the ruling oligarchy of Zurich, and he himself was a university-trained man with a humanistic education. He was for a time a close friend of Zwingli, through whose influence he experienced some kind of conversion in 1522 to a more serious religious outlook. As Grebel and others became increasingly disillusioned with what they considered Zwingli's abandonment of evangelical principles, they found themselves being denounced from the pulpit by Zwingli and the other Zurich ministers. The leading issue between the radicals, who came to be called the Swiss Brethren, and Zwingli, and the civil authorities who supported him, was baptism. Grebel and his followers reminded Zwingli he had once rejected infant baptism, and they claimed they derived their own view from him.

In January 1525, a public disputation was held in Zurich, with Zwingli and his colleague Bullinger facing Grebel and his friends, Felix Manz, Wilhelm Reublin, and Georg Cajacob, called Blaurock. Though the radicals defended their views with great eloquence, denying that infant baptism had any sanction in the Scriptures, the city council ruled in favor of Zwingli and infant baptism.

Meetings of the Brethren were forbidden, and parents were ordered to have their infants baptized within eight days if they had not already done so, on pain of expulsion from the city. The response came on January 21 when Grebel, a layman, baptized Blaurock, an ordained priest. Hitherto the Brethren had openly opposed infant baptism; now they went farther and, by this fateful step, introduced the practice of adult baptism. Thus January 21, 1525, marked the beginning of a movement that added a new dimension to the religious ferment of the period and a new element in the history of Christianity.

The movement spread rapidly. The Brethren began evangelizing the surrounding territories with great success, converting and baptizing many. In October, Grebel, Manz, and Blaurock were all arrested. After another disputation, in which they again faced Zwingli, they were put on trial. Here Zwingli spoke against them, making charges based on second- and third-hand reports and without basis in fact: They were opposed to all civil government, believed that all things should be held in common, and held that those who had received believers' baptism could not sin. He also reported, on hearsay evidence, a remark of Blaurock that seemed to sanction armed resistance.

Although the accused vigorously defended themselves from the charges of communism and revolution, they were all sentenced on November 18 to imprisonment on bread and water. During the winter other Anabaptists were imprisoned in Zurich, including

Hubmaier, of whom more will be said later. The movement continued and grew, however, with the result that a new trial was held in March of 1526, leading to a sentence of life imprisonment for the three leaders and fourteen others, including six women. On March 7, the council issued a decree against rebaptizing; the penalty for disobedience was to be death by drowning. Two weeks later the prisoners escaped. The three leaders went their separate ways, still preaching their faith. Zwingli's policy toward the Anabaptists continued to harden; in November the council decreed the death penalty for anyone listening to Anabaptist preaching.

In December Manz and Blaurock were caught and tried. Blaurock, who was not a citizen of Zurich, was whipped and banished. Manz was executed by drowning on January 5, 1527, thereby becoming the first Anabaptist martyr. Grebel had already died, apparently of the plague, around August 1526.

Among the other Anabaptists who were in Zurich about this time was [Balthasar Hubmaier](#) (d. 1528). He had the degree of Doctor of Theology from the University of Ingolstadt, where he had had a distinguished career. Later he had been chief preacher in the cathedral of Regensburg (Ratisbon). There he had taken a leading part in an anti-Semitic movement, which led to the expulsion of the Jews from the city in 1519. By 1522 he had abandoned the Roman church. He came to Zurich and there espoused radical views like those of Grebel. He left the city after the disputation of October 1523, and was subjected to harassment by the imperial authorities because of his views. In 1524 he wrote a little tract entitled *Concerning Heretics and Those Who Burn Them*. It is the earliest plea for complete religious toleration. If heretics cannot be turned from their errors by means of the Scriptures, he argues, they should be left to their madness. The inquisitors who condemn heretics to the fire are the greatest heretics of all. To burn heretics is in appearance to profess Christ, but in reality to deny him.

By 1525 Hubmaier, now living at Waldshut, had become an Anabaptist, accepted rebaptism for himself and begun rebaptizing others. He became involved in a controversy with Zwingli in which he defended believers' baptism while Zwingli argued that the Anabaptists threatened the overthrow of the established order. Late in 1525 Austrian troops occupied Waldshut because of the radical religious views that had become established there, and Hubmaier fled to Zurich, where he was soon arrested. Under torture he recanted his views, a lapse he later bitterly regretted. Expelled from the city, he finally found a refuge in Moravia for a while. In Moravia, a fief of the Bohemian crown, the nobles enjoyed a large degree of independence and could protect religious radicals on their estates. Some of them were converted by Hubmaier, who was able, as a consequence, to work freely in the neighborhood of the town of Nikolsburg. Within a year six thousand persons were said to have been rebaptized.

Within the community, however, a split occurred. Hubmaier was more conservative than

some of the other leaders, especially [Hans Hut](#), who had been much influenced by the radical ideas of Thomas Müntzer. Hubmaier believed that the state was ordained by God, envisaged the possibility of a Christian magistrate, and sanctioned capital punishment and just wars. The more radical group wanted community of goods, and denied that Christians could use the sword in self-defense, serve as magistrates, or pay taxes. Hut, like many of the Anabaptists, lived in an eschatological atmosphere: He expected the imminent coming of Christ, which he was said to have predicted for Pentecost in 1528. He was a believer in visions and dreams as bearers of divine revelations. He spoke with a wild enthusiasm that convinced many; before coming to Moravia he had had great success in leading the Anabaptist community in Augsburg. It was his mission, he claimed, to announce the overthrow of the ungodly by the righteous. In Moravia, however, he was successfully opposed by Hubmaier, who had the support of the local nobles, and Hut was imprisoned.

Hut managed to escape and made his way to Vienna. In Austria he preached with great success. In 1527, while attending the so-called Martyrs' Synod of Anabaptists in Augsburg, he was arrested, tortured, and put on trial. Before the trial was over, he died, either accidentally or in an attempt to escape. His corpse was condemned to be burned at the stake.

Hubmaier's favorable attitude toward civil government did not save him from the fate civil government reserved for Anabaptists. In 1526 Ferdinand, brother of Charles V, became margrave of Moravia when he was elected king of Bohemia. He set out at once to crush the Anabaptists. Hubmaier and his wife were imprisoned and tried. This time he was steadfast under torture and was burned at the stake in Vienna on March 10, 1528. Three days later his wife, whose loyalty to her husband and his principles had never wavered, was thrown into the Danube River with a rock tied around her neck.

At Nikolsburg, conflict continued between the Hubmaier and Hut factions, until the lord of the area asked the radical group to leave his lands. They moved to Austerlitz, about thirty miles to the north, where they were well received by the local nobles; they settled there in 1528. This Austerlitz group occupies a position of great historical significance because they were the first Anabaptists to form a completely communistic society. Following the example of the Apostles and the early church, they practiced complete community of goods, administered by elected officials. Communism was fully established by 1529, the year that saw the arrival of [Jacob Hutter](#), whose influence among them was so profound that they took his name and have since been known as the Hutterites.

Hutter was a Tyrolese who had learned the hatter's trade, from which he took his name (the German word for hat is Hut). He became leader of the Tyrolese Anabaptists, and to escape persecution organized a migration of his followers to the greater safety of Moravia. He remained in the Tyrol, but was called to Moravia to settle the conflicts caused by the arrival of the newcomers, which had aggravated the discord that was endemic among the

Moravian Anabaptists. Convinced of his divine mission to lead the Moravian groups, he eventually succeeded in having his claims recognized. He also believed, and induced his followers to agree, that they were the true church, outside of which there was no salvation.

Ferdinand I continued his efforts to suppress the Anabaptists, and in 1535 they were expelled from Moravia. They had nowhere to go, and suffered great hardships as homeless wanderers. This was the common fate of the Anabaptists in that period. Hutter, urged by his followers to look out for his own safety, returned to the Tyrol. He believed that suffering was the inescapable lot of the chosen and would lead to their eventual triumph. Captured by the Austrian authorities, he remained steadfast under torture. On February 25, 1536, he was put to death by burning.

Persecution failed to break the spirit of the Hutterites or to destroy their organization. In 1536 they decided to divide up into small groups and seek homes and work. The nobles, who had been reluctantly compelled to expel them the previous year, were happy to receive them back, though they were careful to avoid open defiance of the law. The Brethren were able to rebuild their old communities, establish many new ones, and set up a systematic and effective missionary organization, the best one in Europe at the time. The missionaries were persecuted without mercy; four-fifths of them were executed. The Moravian communities were subject to another period of severe persecution from 1547 to Ferdinand's death in 1564. This was followed by a period during which they were left alone to a great extent and were able to carry on their proselytizing activities, which were often accompanied by a sense of proud and intolerant self-righteousness and self-assurance. One reason for this attitude was the number of different sects that developed around them in Moravia; according to a Venetian traveler who visited the area, there were thirteen or fourteen different ones in Austerlitz alone.

Even within the Hutterite group there was dissension and a lack of charity. The preachers were domineering and exclusive; the members were in constant conflict with each other; and the use of the ban, a regular feature of Anabaptist communities, was carried to such extremes among the Hutterites that the excluded members were even refused food and drink. Nevertheless, the prosperity of the Hutterites and the degree of toleration they enjoyed proved very attractive to other religious radicals, who visited them and made attempts to unite with them. These included Greeks, Italians, and Poles.

By 1572 the Hutterites had reached the height of their success and prosperity, with perhaps as many as thirty thousand baptized adults and a flourishing economy. In that year the tide turned when their protector Lord Liechtenstein died without heirs. In 1576 the emperor sold his domains to a member of a devout Catholic family, who proceeded to take energetic measures against the heretics in and around Nikolsburg. His work was completed in the seventeenth century by the combined efforts of the Jesuit order and the Austrian government. Thousands died in the persecution; according to a chronicler, they were torn to pieces on the rack, burned, roasted on pillars, torn with red-hot tongs, shut up

in houses and burned in masses, hanged on trees, killed by the sword, drowned, starved in prison, and so forth. They were forced to live in caves and pits, in wild forests, in rocks and caverns. Eventually they were obliterated in Moravia, but they have continued to exist in other countries, including the United States.

Something should be said about the economic and social organization of Hutterite communism. Its motivation was not economic but religious. Community of goods was seen as an expression of fellowship, of brotherly love. Only if all things were held in common could selfishness be overcome and the true imitation of Christ attained. The Hutterite organization was anything but individualistic. The community of the faithful was the true church, outside of which nobody could find salvation, and to which each individual owed complete obedience. The basic unit in their communities was the "household," which normally included several hundred persons living in one building under a head officer known as a "householder." All members ate in a common dining room; nurseries, sick rooms, and schools were also shared in common. Outside of such personal effects as clothing and bed linen, there were no individual possessions. Marriage to an outsider resulted in expulsion from the community, and young women were sometimes forced into marriages that were distasteful to them.

The head of the entire Hutterite community was the officer known as the chief bishop. Under him were "ministers of the Word," or elders, and "ministers of necessities," or deacons. Preachers were chosen by the whole community and had much authority. Thus the Hutterian Brethren present one of the most highly organized religious communities of the time. If it did not flower into a model of brotherly love, it did undeniably achieve a remarkable economic prosperity. The Hutterites raised the largest crops in the area and bred the best horses. Their craftsmen were similarly outstanding.

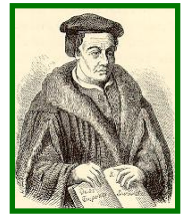
The Anabaptists were people of peaceful habits who were not interested in the violent overthrow of existing institutions. That they were considered dangerous was the result partly of their unorthodox religious doctrines, which were considered subversive in an era of close union between church and state, and partly of the activities of such men as Andreas Carlstadt, Thomas Müntzer and Melchior Hofmann, as well as the tragic events of 1534 and 1535 in Münster, events which appeared to be linked with the ideas of these men.

Andreas Bodenstein von Carlstadt was an older colleague of Luther on the faculty of the University of Wittenberg, and became one of Luther's followers. However, he soon went beyond his leader in the radicalism of his views, and was banished from Saxony in 1524. While living in Rothenburg he became implicated in the Peasants' Revolt, was imprisoned, escaped, and found refuge with Luther, who generously received his old adversary in his own home for a while, and made it possible for him to live in the neighborhood of Wittenberg from 1525 to 1529. In his last years Carlstadt became more conservative. He ended his days as a professor of theology at Basel, where the plague

carried him off in 1541.

His radical views had a good deal of influence. He was the first to state publicly a purely symbolic view on communion that the bread and wine were merely symbols of the body and blood of Christ and that Christ was not present in the communion. Both baptism and the Lord's Supper were completely unnecessary ceremonies. He refused to baptize infants and may have suspended celebration of the Lord's Supper while he was still a priest in Saxony. He thus went even beyond the Anabaptists's position, since they still believed in these ceremonies, though not in the traditional form. His view of the Lord's Supper may have influenced Zwingli, and he seems to have had some impact on humanists and artists; in 1519 he dedicated a book to Albrecht Dürer.

A more formidable figure was Thomas Müntzer, who has been much studied in recent years by western scholars and Communists alike. Since the time of Friedrich Engels, Communists have made a hero of him. Müntzer, however, was interested not primarily in the class struggle but in religion. He was a learned man, with a degree in theology and a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. As a priest in the Saxon town of Zwickau, he began to preach sermons, which became more and more radical. He became associated with the Zwickau prophets, who believed in direct revelation by the Spirit, rejected infant baptism, and looked for the triumph of the Turk as Antichrist, followed by the millennium. Müntzer believed that the millennium would be ushered in by a bloody rising of the elect, who would slaughter the ungodly.



He began to direct his preaching to the poor exclusively and to place his hopes for the recovery of the truth in the common people. His preaching was so inflammatory that he was expelled from Zwickau and later from Prague. Like Carlstadt, he was at one time a follower of Luther, but later rejected Luther's teachings. At the Saxon town of Allstedt, where he became a pastor in 1523, he acquired a large following among the humbler classes, and organized the "League of the Elect" to carry out the final reformation, which would bring in the millennium. As a result of his leadership, a nearby chapel was destroyed by his followers in March 1524. Müntzer did not hesitate to preach the imminent bloody destruction of the ungodly in the presence of the brother and nephew of Frederick the Wise (both of whom were to be electors of Saxony), urging them to take the lead in this pious work. Here he seems to have been identifying the ungodly with the Lutheran pastors and perhaps Luther himself. Later he turned against the princes, predicting their overthrow in the near future. When the princes, justifiably alarmed and warned by Luther, tried to restrict his revolutionary activities, he responded by pamphlets attacking both the princes and Luther. The princes, he wrote, must be put down and the poor must take over provided that the poor were properly led by a new, inspired servant of God. The prophet was, of course, Müntzer himself. In August of 1524, he escaped from Allstedt, breaking his previous promise not to leave the town.

After further wandering, preaching, and expulsions, his career reached its climax and ended in the Peasants' Revolt. He built up a following among the Thuringian peasants, whom he urged to hasten the triumph of the saints through renewed violence. In April 1525 he took part in a raid that destroyed convents and monasteries. In the same month he wrote a bloodthirsty letter to his followers in Allstedt: "At them, at them, while the fire is hot! Don't let your sword get cold!" At Frankenhausem there was an army of eight thousand peasants who asked Müntzer to lead them. He did so, confident that the wrath of the Almighty would destroy the enemy. The peasants lacked training, proper equipment, and skilled military leadership. They faced an army of the princes, led by Philip of Hesse, which was well trained, well equipped, and skillfully led. The peasants were offered the chance to depart unharmed if they would turn Müntzer over, but Müntzer promised them that God would give them protection and victory. The princes, receiving no answer to the offer, attacked. The peasants were dispersed and cut down. This was the battle of Frankenhausem (May 15, 1525). Müntzer did not long survive it; he was found hiding in a cellar, and after being tortured was beheaded on May 27. Before his death he recanted and took communion according to the Catholic rite.

Another inflammatory prophet with an eschatological outlook was [Melchior Hofmann](#), a Swabian furrier, who also started as a follower of Luther but later broke with him. As an itinerant preacher, he compiled an impressive record of expulsions. He was evicted from the territories of the Teutonic Knights and of the kings of Sweden and Denmark; he once had to take flight from the city of Lbeck to save his life. He became an Anabaptist in Strasbourg in 1530, and later had great success in the Netherlands, where he acquired a large and fanatical following. In 1531, ten of his followers were beheaded in The Hague. Hofmann also spent a good deal of time in Strasbourg, which he became convinced would be the scene of the coming of the kingdom of Christ. First there would be a terrible slaughter of unbelievers, but the righteous would triumph. Christ would appear, to be greeted by the 144,000 of the redeemed mentioned in the fourteenth chapter of the Apocalypse, with Hofmann at their head. In May 1533, in Strasbourg, Hofmann intentionally provoked his own arrest. He remained in prison, continuing to predict the siege and the Lord's coming, until his death in 1543.

Hofmann saw himself as Enoch or Elijah, that is one of the ordained witnesses of the Second Coming. Unlike Carlstadt and Müntzer, he was not a man of learning, but he believed that the inspiration of the Holy Spirit made up for his lack of education and that book learning was really a hindrance. His teaching of the imminent end of the world, his visions, dreams, revelations, and prophecies, all had a great and unsettling effect in the excitable and overcharged religious atmosphere of the time, especially among the poor, always eager to look for future and supernatural solace for their present miseries. Although he advocated unconditional obedience to the civil government which in any case was not destined to last long, since the world was hastening to its end the inevitable result of his work was violence and disorder. Contemporaries saw a connection between his work in the Netherlands and the tragic events at Münster. Among his converts was Jan

Matthys, a baker of Haarlem, later to be the leader of the movement in Münster. Between 1528 and 1536, the Low Countries experienced war, famine, flood, and plague, heightening the eschatological mood induced by Hofmann's teaching. In Amsterdam some of his followers caused disturbances in 1534 and 1535; the climax came when a party of forty tried to take the town hall by storm. Some of the Melchiorities, as Hofmann's followers were called, broke with the extremist group, but it was from the extremists that recruits were supplied for the New Jerusalem at Münster.

In the episcopal city of Münster in Westphalia, the Reformation was introduced in its Lutheran form in 1532 and 1533, under the leadership of a priest named Bernhard Rothmann. Soon he moved to a more radical position, thereby splitting the Reformed party. He was strengthened by an influx of Melchiorites from the Netherlands. Many of these newcomers were poor, and together with the poorer classes of the city were attracted by the communistic ideas that Rothmann began to emphasize. True Christians, he claimed, must emulate the early church and have all things in common. By the early days of 1534, he was the dominant figure in the religious life of the city. At that time, two followers of Matthys appeared, rebaptizing Rothmann and many others. Within a few days, over fourteen hundred had been rebaptized.

The climactic phase of the events at Mnster began with the arrival of Matthys and one of his disciples, Jan Beukelszoon, or John of Leyden. Soon these men were the leaders of the Anabaptists, and by means of an armed uprising they succeeded in taking over the town and expelling all Lutherans and Catholics who refused to join their movement. By the beginning of March 1534 the expulsions were complete. They took place in bitter cold weather, and no consideration was shown to the old, to the sick, to women or small children. Those expelled had to leave all their belongings behind and were reduced to beggary. Matthys had announced his intention of killing the godless, but he had been dissuaded from so drastic a step.

The bishop of Mnster, aided by both Catholic and Protestant rulers, including Philip of Hesse, besieged the city. Meanwhile Anabaptists from the Netherlands swarmed to the New Jerusalem. Under these conditions Matthys set up his theocracy, based on communism and terror. All citizens had to give up their money; food and lodgings became public property, and doors of houses had to be kept open at all times. Those who objected were suppressed; when a blacksmith spoke out against him, Matthys called the population together and in their presence killed him by his own hand. Others were executed or imprisoned. All books were prohibited except the Bible; all others had to be turned over to the authorities for burning. Meanwhile, in neighboring areas, because of the attraction that Mnster was exercising, governments became alarmed and took rigorous measures against Anabaptists, putting large numbers to death.

On Easter Sunday, April 4, Matthys received a divine command, as he thought, to conduct

a sortie with a few men against the besieging forces. He was convinced that God would give victory to his small group. In the sortie he was killed, and the leadership passed to John of Leyden. This man of illegitimate birth, a failure in business, with a smattering of education, was handsome and eloquent, and knew how to establish a powerful hold over the minds of the people. He brought about a profound change in the constitution by running through the city naked, in a frenzy; afterwards there followed three days of ecstasy during which he did not speak. He then announced that the Lord had revealed to him the necessity of putting an end to the former system of government the work of men and replacing it with one that came from God. At the head of the new government he placed himself, assisted by a body of twelve men, appointed by him, who were known as the elders or judges of the Tribes of Israel. In September he had himself crowned king, and announced that he was to rule not only Mnster but the whole world.

The new government had power over all the affairs of the town and the lives of citizens. Artisans were compelled to work without pay. The death penalty was to be imposed for a vast number of offenses including lying, slander, avarice, quarreling, insubordination of children against parents and of wives against husbands, adultery, blasphemy, complaining, and any insubordinate behavior against the government. The most radical change was polygamy, to which there was initially a great deal of resistance and even an armed rising, which put John in jail for a while. In the end he won out and executed the rebels and others who objected to polygamy. All persons of marriageable age had to marry. One reason for polygamy was that the number of women in the city far exceeded the number of men, many wives having been left behind by the exiles. Many men acquired a plurality of wives; one of the most enthusiastic was John himself, who had fifteen. Some women were executed for refusing to obey the new regulations; some established wives were put to death for quarreling with new ones whom their husbands had married. Eventually divorce was permitted, and the marriage ceremony discontinued, so that marriages could be made and unmade freely. This led to sexual promiscuity, a condition far different from the strict morals common among Anabaptists.

John surrounded himself with the trappings of monarchy, including splendid clothing, a court of two hundred persons, a crown, a scepter, and a globe, which signified his dominion over the whole earth. He changed the names of the gates and streets of the city and of the days of the week to celebrate the beginning of a new epoch for mankind. All this was at the expense of the masses, who had to submit to further confiscations of property; their homes were searched, and much of their clothing and bedding was taken from them. John found it advisable to form an armed bodyguard, made up not of members of the native population but of immigrants who had come to Mnster destitute and were entirely dependent on him.

The bishop had not been idle. Early in January 1535, the city was completely surrounded by the besieging forces, and famine set in. The desperate population ate animals, shoes, and the bodies of the dead. The king and his court appear to have had plenty of food at all

times. The terror was intensified in an effort to subdue discontent. When starvation had become widespread, John permitted the departure of those who wanted to leave. This did not end their sufferings; the able-bodied men were killed by the besieging troops; and women, children, and old people were not allowed to pass through the lines and remained to starve. Finally the bishop executed some of the survivors and sent the others to remote parts of the diocese.

The besiegers offered an amnesty to the inhabitants if they would hand over John and his court, but John's ruthless terror prevented this. Eventually the city was betrayed by two men who escaped to the enemy and showed them where to attack. On the night of June 24, Mⁿster was entered and taken after a bitter struggle. The surviving men accepted the offer of a safe-conduct, only to be massacred after laying down their arms. All the leading Anabaptists were killed. John of Leyden and a couple of his chief henchmen were led around in chains for months and publicly exhibited. On January 22, 1536, they were tortured to death with red-hot tongs in Mⁿster. The bodies were placed in iron cages and suspended from the tower of one of the churches. Mⁿster became once more a Catholic city and its fortifications were razed.

Though there were a few more manifestations of this sort, the violent phase of Anabaptism declined after the ghastly events at Mⁿster. The entire movement, however, had to bear the terrible burden of association in the public mind with what had happened there. That it survived was due, to a great extent, to the work of Menno Simons (1496-1561). As a priest in West Frisia, he was in a good position to learn about the excesses of the Mⁿsterites and their followers in the Netherlands. The earliest of his extant writings is an attack on John of Leyden, whom Menno identifies with Antichrist. Meanwhile, however, he had come to reject some of the leading Catholic doctrines, and in 1536 he voluntarily renounced the priesthood. Some time during the following year he was rebaptized.


Soon thereafter he began his work of holding together, strengthening, and building up the scattered Anabaptist communities. From 1536 to 1543 he worked in the Netherlands, and it testifies to his success that rewards were offered for his arrest and that Charles V issued an edict against him in 1542. From 1543 to his death in 1561, his field of activity was northern Germany. His position was that of the chief of a number of bishops, each of whom was in charge of a specific territory. It was largely as a result of his activities that the movement in the Netherlands and northern Germany was neither destroyed by its enemies nor taken over by the fanatical fringe.

Menno aroused a good deal of opposition among the Anabaptists by his increasing severity on the subject of the ban, which, as we have seen, was the Anabaptist form of excommunication and was accompanied by the "shunning," or avoidance, of the excommunicated members. At a conference in Strasbourg in 1557, at which many countries were represented, Menno and his northern colleagues were urged to be less

harsh on this issue. Instead of yielding, they excommunicated their opponents. In his opinion, the ban and shunning applied to every human relationship, even those between wives and husbands and between parents and children. Yet, although his views were rejected by many Anabaptists, Menno is considered the greatest of their leaders, and it is appropriate that they should be known by his name as Mennonites.

THE SPIRITUALISTS

The term spiritualism, used in connection with the radicals of the Reformation, refers to a type of religion that minimizes the importance of external forms and organization and that even diminishes the authority of the written word of Scripture. It emphasizes inward religion, the illumination of the heart by the Spirit through the witness of the inner Word. Stated in such general terms, spiritualism can be found in many places in the Reformation period; there were spiritualist tendencies in Luther himself, though Luther had no sympathy for the spiritualists. By the nature of their outlook, the spiritualists were not founders of churches or of an organized movement, yet some of them had a great influence. Carlstadt and Müntzer may be called spiritualists, but most of them were peaceful rather than violent. One of the most important was Caspar Schwenckfeld (1489-1561).

A well-to-do Silesian nobleman and landowner, he was for a while a follower of Luther, but in time his views diverged from those of the great reformer. Unlike Luther, he  believed that the man who is justified by faith is not a sinner, but can keep God's commandments and achieve sanctification; he was distressed at the absence of regenerated lives among Luther's followers. He also came to renounce the doctrine of the presence of Christ in the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper, adopting a purely spiritual interpretation according to which Christ feeds the soul spiritually but not physically, and only the soul of his true followers. Luther, for his part, treated Schwenckfeld with outstanding rudeness. Schwenckfeld also minimized the importance of the external rite of baptism, though he differed from the Anabaptists; unlike them, he did not repudiate water baptism where it had been performed in infancy, and he did not accept believers' baptism.

When Ferdinand became king of Bohemia and Hungary in 1526, his domains included Silesia. He was even more hostile to Schwenckfeld's views than to Luther's. In 1529 Schwenckfeld went into voluntary exile, and for the rest of his life was a homeless wanderer, living in a number of places and facing constant danger. However, his lot was far better than that of many of the other radicals; he had powerful friends who showed him favor and extended hospitality to him. He was frequently involved in controversies, of which one of the most important was with Pilgram Marpeck, an Anabaptist leader who wanted to unite the Anabaptists and counteract their tendency to go over to Schwenckfeld. Schwenckfeld objected to what he considered the excessive concern of the Anabaptists

with externals; he also had a much higher regard than they for the Old Testament. While Marpeck upheld the view that Christians should be obedient to the state, but must not wield secular authority or bear arms, Schwenckfeld had a much more positive attitude toward the civil authority. He felt that the magistrate's authority was Christian and that the state should take positive measures in the fields of charity, education, and public works. On a wide range of issues, the differences between the Anabaptist position and that of Schwenckfeld became clear.

Schwenckfeld also engaged in debate with the Lutherans. Philip Melanchthon himself took the lead in producing a document attacking Luther. The main point of difference between Schwenckfeld's position and that of Luther is that, while Luther did not find in man a spark of righteousness, Schwenckfeld believed that man could, through Christ, be transformed and restored to his original being, immortal and divine. The new man can understand the Word, both the primary Word, which is the inward revelation, and the secondary Word of the Bible, which can be understood only by the man who has first received the inner Word. The church, for Schwenckfeld, was spiritual and invisible, existing throughout time and space and bound together by faith under the headship of Christ. Therefore, he could not identify himself with any of the existing churches and had no desire to found another one.

Another important spiritualist was Sebastian Franck (1499-1542). A well-educated man, he was ordained as a priest but soon became a member of the Lutheran clergy. By 1530 he had moved to the spiritualist position and left the Lutheran church. In an early writing, he referred to the new sects of Lutherans, Zwinglians, and Anabaptists and declared that a fourth the spiritualist would reject all outward forms. The outward church, according to him, went up to Heaven after the death of the Apostles, so that for fourteen hundred years there had existed no true outward church or sacrament. The inner truth remained and was received by the faithful from the Spirit. All outward things in the church have been done away with and are not to be restored. He had a broad conception of the nature of the true church, declaring there were many Christians who had never heard of Christ, as among the heathen and Turks.

He agreed with Servetus on the Trinity, which means that he denied the orthodox doctrine. Like Schwenckfeld, he believed that the Bible could not be understood except by those who are taught of God, and he advised against too much reliance on the literal word of Scripture. He minimized the importance of theological commentaries and disputes, declaring that the Ten Commandments and the Apostles' Creed contained enough doctrine for pious Christians. He even pointed out what he considered contradictions in the Bible. His views aroused such strong opposition that he was forced to lead the wandering life of the religious radicals until he finally found refuge in Basel, where he spent his last years in comfort, having married a woman who brought a good dowry. In 1540, a meeting of theologians at Schmalkalden, attended by Melanchthon and Bucer among others, condemned Franck, Schwenckfeld, and the Anabaptists, emphasizing the visible church

and the external Word.

One of Franck's numerous writings was a translation of Agrippa von Nettesheim's book on the vanity of the sciences. Franck shared Agrippa's views on the unreliability of human knowledge, and this led him to a more tolerant position than was common at the time. Since all knowledge is worthless, according to him, error and truth are equally distributed among Christians and non-Christians, orthodox and heretics. He claimed to have learned more from Plato, Plotinus, and Hermes Trismegistus than from Moses.

Schwenckfeld and Franck are only two of the men who may be called spiritualists in the sixteenth century. Their influence, by the very nature of their beliefs, is impossible to measure; nevertheless, it has been great. The idea of an inward religion, without formal creeds and ceremonial observances, had a powerful appeal to men who were indifferent to, or disgusted by, the dogmatism and bigotry sometimes manifested by the official churches. Though the men who espoused such radical views were treated as outcasts by the ruling authorities in their day, their quiet influence, working as it were beneath the surface of events, has continued to provide, for many persons, a more satisfying interpretation of the Christian life than they could find anywhere else. The Christian tradition, and perhaps the survival of Christianity, owe much to them. Possibly they illustrate what Paul Tillich meant when he said that "... those who seem weak in history finally shape history."¹⁰

THE EVANGELICAL RATIONALISTS

In some ways, the most radical and daring of the dissidents of the Reformation period were those persons who are now known as the Evangelical Rationalists. They rejected both the Protestant and Catholic communions, had faith in reason as a source of religious truth, and were distinguished by a rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity. They shared characteristics of the Anabaptists and spiritualists; they might reject infant baptism and minimize external observances. Like the Anabaptists, but unlike the spiritualists, they believed in the formation of groups of like-minded believers. They came predominantly from the south of Europe, often from Italy, and in a sense they may be said to represent the spirit of the Renaissance applied to religion; the boldness of their thought in the face of established tradition, their reliance on reason, and the Italian origin of so many of them, all make this connection at least plausible. Michael Servetus and Sebastian Castellio, discussed elsewhere in this book (see Chapter 14), were among the most important of them. Here we shall single out two men: Lelio Sozzini and his nephew, Fausto Sozzini.

Lelio Sozzini (Latinized as Laelius Socinus, 1525-62) was a member of a distinguished legal family of Siena. Study of the Bible led him to become a Protestant while still very young, and from the first he was attracted to the more radical elements in the movement. These tendencies were no doubt encouraged by his residence in Switzerland, a favorite

refuge for religious radicals from Italy whom he had a chance to meet, and by his extensive travels. In Poland, one of the places he visited, the doctrine of the Trinity had already begun to be questioned. He had a habit of presenting Calvin and others with questions about abstruse theological doctrines, and Calvin advised him to bridle his curiosity. He criticized Calvin for the execution of Servetus, whose death drew Lelio's attention to the doctrine of the Trinity. Although his orthodoxy was questioned, he managed to live in Zurich without serious trouble until his death.

His nephew, Fausto, often paid visits to him, and after his uncle's death acquired his papers and books. Fausto Sozzini (Latinized as Faustus Socinus, 1539-1604) is a major figure in the history of the Reformation. A Sienese like his uncle, he lived in Italy, France, and Switzerland before moving in 1579 to Poland, which was to be the chief center of his activities. Before this date his radical theological views had already begun to develop. He insisted that there was nothing in the Bible contrary to reason, and, therefore, that the rational meaning of the Scriptures had to be grasped. He also refused to accept the traditional doctrine of the two natures in Christ. His view was that Christ, while on earth, was purely human; but that after the resurrection God shared His power with him and made him, though human, truly God. Man is by nature mortal, according to Fausto; and Christ, being entirely human, was also mortal. Christ did not provide satisfaction for man's sin; to make the innocent suffer for the guilty was unworthy of God. Instead of emphasizing the death of Jesus on the cross, he emphasized his resurrection and ascension; instead of God's wrath, he laid stress on his loving kindness.

When Fausto arrived in Poland, he came to a country that occupied a singular position in the history of the Reformation. Though ruled by Catholic kings, it provided a refuge for religious dissenters from all over Europe. This unusual situation was made possible largely by the peculiarities of the Polish constitution. The monarchy was weak; from 1572 it had been elective. The nobles exercised great power, and individual members of the nobility were able to provide protection on their estates for religious reformers and radicals whose ideas appealed to them. Conditions became even more favorable in the reign of King Sigismund II (1548-72). He was a Catholic who refused to suppress religious dissent, and in words which rang out in that age, he declared that he would not try to force anyone's conscience, because it was not his business to lay down what people should believe. In 1555, the Polish Diet, the national representative body, permitted every nobleman to introduce on his estates any worship that he pleased. At about the same time, a Reformed church, strongly Calvinistic, was organized. When Poland and Lithuania were united by the Union of Lublin in 1569, Reformed and radical ideas spread into Lithuania.

When the diet met in 1573 to elect a successor to Sigismund, the Catholic members favored the candidacy of Henry Anjou, brother to the king of France. To allay the fears aroused among the Protestants by Henry's known connection with the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of the preceding year (See Chapter 17), the Catholics agreed to the "Confederation of Warsaw," a guarantee of religious freedom to all sects, which made

Poland unique in Europe at the time. Henry was elected king and had to abide, though reluctantly, by this declaration. When he gave up his Polish throne in 1574 to become king of France, his successor, Stephen B thory (1575 86), had to observe the same conditions. Though a Catholic, he maintained during his reign a policy of toleration.

Within the Polish Reformed Church a schism developed when some members, in the 1550s, began to deny the doctrine of the Trinity. These members officially seceded from the church in 1563 and held their first synod in 1565. Their new organization was known as the Minor Reformed Church of Poland. It was the earliest organized Antitrinitarian church in Europe. It was opposed by both the Catholics and the more orthodox Protestants and was divided within itself. Although all the members rejected the orthodox doctrines of baptism and the Trinity, they were by no means agreed as to what teachings they accepted in their place.

There was also a conflict within the new church concerning the relationship of Christians with the secular world. Members were not in accord over the questions of whether it was allowable to hold property, perform military service, pay taxes for military purposes, or hold public office. The more extreme group, believing in complete separation from the state and civil life, held that it was wrong for a Christian to do any of these things. Since he must not resist evil, the Christian, they held, is even forbidden to have recourse to the law to seek redress of injuries. He must submit to the loss of whatever is taken from him by some enemy, and obey any conqueror, even the Turk.

These extreme positions appealed most to those who had the least to lose from them, namely the poor and the foreign refugees, although some nobles adhered to these views, freed their serfs, and renounced the use of the sword. The chief center of those who held this position was the community of Rakw, founded in 1569 in an effort to withdraw from the world and create an ideal society. Against the extreme positions held by the Racovians were arrayed many nobles and other members of the Minor Reformed Church. For them the civil authority was established by God: A Christian could hold public office, even the kingship; could own property; hold serfs; and take up arms in defense of his country, his possessions, and the lives and well-being of his family and himself. It was not wrong to enjoy noble birth or to have recourse to the law for redress of injuries.

These controversies were going strong when Fausto Sozzini arrived in Poland in 1579. He applied for admission to the Minor Reformed Church in the following year and was refused. There were a number of differences between him and the church, of which the chief one was their practice of baptism by immersion, which he rejected. He argued that water baptism, and even more clearly rebaptism, were not needed by Christians. The chief opposition to him came from the Anabaptist Rakw community, which objected to his rationalistic and, in their view, worldly spirit. He never became a member of the church with which he was to be so closely associated. Later, though not in Poland, the church was to be called Socinian after him.

Nevertheless, the Racovians asked him to defend in writing their views on society and the state, which were then under attack. He did so in a much more moderate way than was customary, trying to ward off the accusation that these views were subversive of public order. He, therefore, made many concessions to civil authority: A Christian can hold office if he does not shed blood; he can even go to war if he does not injure anyone; and he can seek redress in a court provided that he does not demand punishment of the party who has injured him. In spite of these and other conciliatory ideas, he incurred the wrath of the king and had to hide for a while.

Over the years the extreme ideas of the Racovians lost out, and the prevailing opinion in the church came to grant the right and duty of the Christian to accept and participate in the activities of the state and society. Fausto himself approached this position more closely. He had a great deal of influence over the rising generation who objected to the strictness of their elders, and in hoping to answer their questions and resolve their doubts he was led to modify and soften his own views. However, he always refused to sanction the taking of life by Christians, under any circumstances. The death sentence for criminals is forbidden because it deprives the victim of a chance to repent and thus of the prospect of eternal life. (Translated into more secular terms, this is not far from the position of Albert Camus on capital punishment, as expressed in his *Reflections on the Guillotine*.) On the other hand, if one accidentally kills a man while defending oneself, this is a sin but only a venial one. And one should not strike his wife unless this will be certain to reform her.

Such was Fausto's influence that he was given credit for purifying the church of its former extreme outlook. The famous Racovian Catechism of 1605 shows the completeness of the change. Fausto had begun in 1603 to draw it up, but had died in 1604 before it was finished, and others completed it. It sanctioned, with appropriate safeguards against violation of the law of Christ, the holding of office, the swearing of oaths, going to court, and charging interest. By this time, the growing moderation of the movement had strengthened it to the point where it began to propagandize foreign countries. In the seventeenth century the Polish Brethren, as they came to be called, undertook missionary journeys to many areas, getting as far west as England and making converts. In 1658 the members of the Polish Minor Church were banished from the country by the diet, and in 1660 they left. Their influence continued and lives today in the Unitarian groups of various countries, including England and the United States.

CONCLUSION

One of the most heartrending aspects of the Reformation is the brutal persecution that was everywhere the lot of the religious radicals. The amount of suffering to which these essentially peaceful and upright people were subjected is incalculable. It has often been said that this persecution was caused by their attitudes toward society, government, and

military service that the rejection of normal social obligations by so many of them appeared to pose a threat to the established order and was met by a ruthless effort to exterminate them. No doubt there is much to be said for this point of view; society will normally strike back, sometimes with the fury born of panic, at apparent threats to its stability. But it ought not to be thought that the religious reasons given for this persecution were mere pretexts. The churches were stronger then than they are now, and the problem of salvation more urgent; those whose religious beliefs challenged the orthodoxies of the time might very well seem to cast doubt on the eternal destiny of those who disagreed with them, and to suppress the views of the radicals could be in essence a suppression of one's own doubts.

Fortunately, the persecution never succeeded in entirely silencing the voices of the radicals, and they have lived on and made invaluable contributions to modern religion and society. The idea of a voluntary church, separate as far as possible from the state; the idea of a religion of the spirit, unhampered by form, creed, or ritual; and the idea of the application of rational thought to religious issues without these, we should be poorer indeed. The intensity of the persecution makes us realize the wide appeal that radical ideas actually had; it would be interesting to know how many people would have been converted to them if they had been free to do so. On all the evidence, the number would have been great indeed.



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CHAPTER 16

ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

ENGLAND

In 1485, as a result of the battle of Bosworth, Henry Tudor became king of England as Henry VII. For several decades, the country had suffered from internal strife as rival factions struggled for the throne. This civil war is known as the Wars of the Roses, and the two contending factions were the house of York, symbolized by the white rose, and the house of Lancaster, represented by the red rose. Though the English monarchy had been one of the strongest in medieval Europe, it suffered a decline for most of the fifteenth century, and its weakness was both a cause and an effect of the Wars of the Roses. The disorder and suffering caused by these wars had made it clear that the indispensable prerequisite for peace was a strong monarch. Throughout the Tudor period the fear of a recurrence of civil strife was ever present in the minds of Englishmen, and this fear helps to explain two conspicuous facts: the acquiescence of the English in the sometimes arbitrary behavior of the Tudor monarchs and the almost obsessive concern with the succession. A disputed succession might bring back chaos; to avert this dreadful possibility it seemed necessary that the monarch should leave behind legitimate male heirs.

Henry VII himself came to the throne with a flimsy hereditary claim. His ancestry on both sides was tainted with illegitimacy, a serious bar to the throne. The Tudors themselves were a Welsh family of little distinction of birth. Henry became king in fact because he triumphed at Bosworth. In the battle his rival, the Yorkist king Richard III, was killed leaving no heirs. Richard's brother and predecessor, Edward IV, who had died in 1483, had left behind two sons, who were murdered. The death of these two young princes is one of the great unsolved mysteries of English history. Suspicion has generally rested on Richard III as the murderer of his nephews, but his guilt has never been conclusively proved; in fact, it has been seriously doubted by some students.

When Henry VII came to the throne, he faced staggering problems. He needed to heal the wounds left by the civil wars and to restore internal peace and unity. He had to strengthen both his own claim to the throne and the badly damaged prestige of the crown. The

treasury was empty, the economy had been disrupted, and English standing abroad was low. The fact that he achieved a considerable measure of success in all these areas is a sign of his greatness as a king.

Shortly after his coronation, he married Elizabeth of York, daughter of Edward IV. The marriage took place on January 18, 1486, thus uniting the two houses that had struggled for the throne. Nevertheless, Henry was plagued for several years by the appearance of a succession of pretenders, trying to wrest the throne from him. They could count on a good deal of support. Yorkist sympathizers, enemies of the Tudor claim, were to be found not only in England but also in Ireland and Scotland and on the Continent. In Burgundy there was Dowager Duchess Margaret, widow of Charles the Bold and sister of Edward IV and Richard III. The Continental monarchs could be persuaded to give aid and comfort to these pretenders if it seemed to suit their interests. Two of these pretenders, who seemed at the time to pose serious threats, may be mentioned here: Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck.

Lambert Simnel, a young Englishman of obscure birth, appeared on the scene in 1487. His Yorkist backers put him forward as the earl of Warwick, a nephew of the two Yorkist kings. The real earl had been made a prisoner after the battle of Bosworth and placed in the Tower. Simnel was crowned Edward VI in Dublin. With support from Ireland, from Margaret of Burgundy and from some English Yorkists, he invaded England from Ireland with a force of several thousand men. They were met and defeated by the king's forces at the battle of Stoke on June 16, 1487. Henry executed only a few leaders, but collected large fines from many others. The king recognized Simnel as being a tool in the hands of others and no threat to himself. He took him into his own service, first as a kitchen boy and later as a falconer.

The threat from Simnel had been serious. Even more serious, and more long-lived, was the crisis connected with Perkin Warbeck, whose prominence dates from 1491 when he appeared in Cork in Ireland. He appears to have been from Tournai in the Netherlands and to have been in the employ of a Breton merchant. He was persuaded to pass himself off as the younger of the sons of Edward IV, allowed to remain alive after his brother's murder. Once the plot had gotten started, Warbeck threw himself into it. He was "recognized" by Margaret of Burgundy and even by Emperor Maximilian and other European rulers. The young king of Scotland, James IV, bold and ambitious, backed Warbeck as a weapon against the ancient enemy, and even arranged a marriage between Warbeck and a Scottish noblewoman.

Warbeck, however, helped to precipitate his own ruin by displaying a fatal weakness and lack of courage at decisive moments. In 1495 he came to England from the Low Countries with fourteen ships, but was afraid to land, and the expedition was a fiasco. In 1497 an uprising in Cornwall against the English government provided another opportunity. Warbeck came down from Scotland, picked up several thousand men, was badly defeated

at Exeter, took flight, and, unable to escape, gave himself up. Again, Henry was merciful, executing few, fining many, and putting Warbeck under very light imprisonment. He took advantage of the situation to escape, but was recaptured. This time he was placed in the Tower under close confinement. In 1499 he and the earl of Warwick were accused of plotting with each other to escape and make war against the king. They were both executed in that same year.

There were other threats to Henry's throne, but all were successfully met. The problem of the pretender was related, as we have noted, to foreign affairs. Here Henry, like other contemporary rulers, used his children for diplomatic purposes. In spite of the hostile attitudes of the Scottish king, Henry sought to establish peaceful relations with his neighbor to the north, ending centuries of hostility made more dangerous by the "Old Alliance" between Scotland and France, which went back to the thirteenth century. To this end he worked to arrange a marriage between his older daughter Margaret and James IV. Henry was successful, and the marriage took place in 1503. It did not bring about an immediate end to conflict; Scotland and England were to fight many bloody wars in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Yet the long-term effects of the marriage were momentous; exactly one hundred years after it took place, a descendant of James and Margaret would unite the thrones of England and Scotland; and after another century the two countries would be joined in the kingdom of Great Britain.

Henry was also anxious to establish good relations with Spain, which, since the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella (See Chapter 18), was on its way to becoming one of the most powerful states of Europe. An alliance with Spain would serve to offset the hostility of France. Here again Henry achieved his wishes. In 1489 England and Spain signed the Treaty of Medina del Campo. It provided, among other things, for a marriage between Catherine of Aragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and Arthur, oldest son of Henry and heir to the English throne. The prospective bride and groom were young children at the time, and the marriage did not take place until 1501, when both were in their teens.

Arthur survived the marriage by only a few months. His widow remained in England, certain that she had a divine mission to bring the two countries closer together by marrying Prince Henry, the surviving brother of her late husband. Meanwhile her father and her father-in-law bartered over her fate, both of them neglecting to provide adequately for her needs and the needs of her household. Since canon law forbade marriage between a man and his brother's widow, a dispensation from the pope was necessary. This was granted, after some hesitation, by Pope Julius II. However, at the time of the Henry VII's death in 1509, the marriage had still not taken place.

The Treaty of Medina del Campo contained clauses directed against France, and Henry VII was reluctantly drawn into war on the Continent. In 1489 English troops invaded France in a vain effort to prevent French annexation of the province of Brittany. In 1492 Henry invaded France once more with a large force, but peace was soon made; the French

agreed, among other things, to pay the English a large sum of money and not to assist rebels against the king.

From this time on, Henry refused to get involved in wars on the Continent. As the conflict between France and Spain developed, both sides sought his support; but he remained uncommitted, and his peaceful policy helped greatly in building up the English treasury. One of Henry's great achievements was to make the English crown, impoverished by the civil wars, prosperous and even wealthy. He devised no revolutionary new methods of raising revenue, but made careful use of the traditional sources and took advantage of all his legal rights in this field.

The methods used by the state to raise money differed from those employed today. It is true that Parliament might be called on to grant taxes out of income, but this was considered an emergency expedient to be used in extreme cases, such as war. Furthermore, this sort of taxation, when it was resorted to, was based on an obsolete assessment and its yield was inadequate. The monarch was expected to "live of his own," from the yield of crown lands, customs duties, and his feudal rights. These latter included the lucrative right known as wardship. This meant that when one of the king's vassals died leaving a minor as an heir, the heir became the king's ward until he reached the age of majority, and during the intervening period the income from the estate reverted to the king. Henry's practice was to sell wardship to the highest bidder, and for this he got a very good price.

The income from the royal lands had fallen very low in the turmoil of the civil wars. Henry rectified this in his first Parliament by securing passage of two acts that restored to the crown all lands that had been in its possession on October 2, 1455. The effect of this was to provide the king with a large accretion of landed property from which he was able to draw a sizable income.

Henry's solicitude for English merchants and English trade helped to bring an increase in the level of customs duties. The king kept watch zealously over the commercial interests of his subjects and did not hesitate to take strong action to protect their position. He backed the Merchant Adventurers, who dominated the English cloth trade with Antwerp, when their position was threatened by action of the government of the Netherlands. As a result he was able to conclude treaties that secured their rights.

In his commercial relations with other countries, Henry knew how to use the techniques of trade treaties, tariff wars, and navigation acts. Two such acts were passed, in 1485 and 1489, which required that certain imports be brought into England only on English ships, whose crews were to be predominantly English, and that English merchants should import no goods at all in foreign ships if English ones were available. These acts must have had some effect, since they aroused objections and retaliatory measures from other trading

powers.

Henry's commercial policy was quite successful in dealing with the Netherlands, France, Portugal, Spain, and the Italian cities. He had more trouble with the Hanseatic League, which had extensive privileges in England that Henry would have liked to reduce. He tried in various indirect ways to chip away at those privileges, without a great deal of success. Time was on the English side in this case, though Henry could not have known it. The rise of the national state spelled doom for an international trading organization like the Hanseatic League, which had passed its great days.

Henry's interest in trade partly accounts for his support of the exploring voyages of the Cabots. John Cabot, a Venetian sailor, had interested the merchants of Bristol in sponsoring a voyage westward to Asia, which they did not think Columbus had really reached. The king became interested in the plan, and in 1496 issued letters to Cabot authorizing him to sail east, north, and west (thus avoiding lands to the south claimed by Spain) and discover and occupy any lands not known to Christians. Cabot sailed west in 1497 and reached North America, which he was sure was Asia. He sailed again in 1498 and never returned. Apparently some of his ships once more reached the coast of North America. This voyage may have made clear the fact that the coast of Asia had not in fact been reached, since the area was afterwards referred to by the English as the "New Found Land."

The merchants of Bristol did not lose interest in discovery and colonization, nor did the king. The men of Bristol, in company with some men from the Azores, formed the Company Adventurers to the New Found Land, which received royal letters in 1501 and 1502 giving the rights to found colonies, expel foreigners, and trade with no more restrictions as to place. What they actually accomplished is no longer clear, and nothing is known about them after 1505 and 1506.

In 1509, John Cabot's son Sebastian sailed on an expedition to find the northwest passage to Asia, thus making it clear that the English knew that they had not reached Asia but a new continent. He apparently reached what later became known as Hudson's Bay. He thought that it would reach to Asia, but the danger from ice caused the crew to force a return to England. When Cabot arrived home, Henry VII was dead. In the reign of the new king, Henry VIII, nothing was done by the English in the field of overseas discovery and exploration.

As a king, Henry VII may in one sense have marked the start of a new age in English history because he restored order and founded a stable dynasty. However, in his methods of government and in the character of his rule, he did not break new ground. The "new monarchies" of the sixteenth century, about which historians used to write, are proving on closer examination not to be so new after all. Henry VII, for all practical purposes, ruled

like a medieval king, using traditional methods of government, but restoring them to an efficiency that they had lacked for a century or more.

The English monarchy, like other contemporary monarchies, had worked well with a strong and capable king, but had broken down in the absence of such a king. Henry VII was not only strong and capable, but also hardworking. Surviving documents bearing his initials give proof that he was diligent in overseeing the day-to-day business of administration. His chief instrument of government was the royal council, which had in the fifteenth century been dominated by the nobles and was consequently ineffective. Henry retained the institution but made it an instrument of the royal will. Members of the council were chosen by the king, and Henry picked an able group to assist him, both clergymen and laymen. Like some other monarchies of the time, Henry did not find his chief advisers from among the members of the old nobility.

The royal council did not have a fixed membership or regularly scheduled meetings. There were actually two aspects to the council. On the one hand, there was a small group of advisers the council attendant who remained with the king and were consulted by him on a regular day-to-day basis. There was in addition a larger group the great council varying in number and composition according to the king's pleasure and called on special occasions. To keep order in the west and the north, Henry VII appointed a Council for Wales and the Marches and a Council of the North. Both of these were older institutions now revived and strengthened, and were considered extensions of the royal council and thus the king's authority.

Parliament, like the council, went from being a tool of noble factions to largely an instrument of royal government. Parliament was called at the king's pleasure, and he had the right to dissolve or adjourn it at any time. Henry used it sparingly. He called only seven parliaments during his reign, five during his first ten years and only two during the last fourteen. In the whole reign, Parliament met for a total of only sixty-nine weeks. This infrequency raised no known objections in the country, since Parliament had not yet established itself as a guardian of popular rights in fact, there was no clear conception of popular rights and there was no great demand for regular meetings. Frequent meetings, indeed, might have been unpopular, since they would probably have meant frequent requests for taxes. When Parliament did meet, Henry had little difficulty in getting what he wanted, as his desires tended to coincide with those of the members. The upper house contained the lords temporal and spiritual that is, the members of the nobility or peerage and the archbishops, bishops, and some heads of monasteries. The members of the House of Commons were drawn from the bourgeoisie merchants, businessmen, lawyers and the non-noble landowners who made up the country gentry.

These country gentlemen were to become more and more significant in English government, both local and national. In fact they owed their national significance largely to their local stature, being the leaders in the political and social life of their shires, or

counties. In each county, the leading gentry formed the "county families." From these families the king chose the most important local officials, the justices of the peace. Though the sheriffs, formerly the highest county officials, retained important functions, it was the justices, performing a variety of judicial and administrative duties, who were becoming the chief factors in local administration. Though unpaid, they were willing to serve for the prestige involved in their offices. Henry VII increased their functions, and at the same time brought them under closer royal control.

Some of Henry's predecessors, to expedite the transaction of business or to circumvent the nobles with whom they might be engaged in a struggle for control of the government, had resorted to the use of household offices rather than the great offices of state to handle important affairs. Household offices, as the name indicates, were more closely subject to royal control and less rigidly bound by accumulated rules of procedure. Henry followed this example by using the Chamber, a household office, as his chief financial department, rather than the Exchequer.

Henry knew that his strength rested upon his treasury, and he was, no doubt, aware that, in comparison with the rulers of France and Spain, he was not really rich. By making the most of what he had, and avoiding unnecessary expenditures, particularly wars, he left to his successor a full treasury. He also left behind a reputation for extortion and rapacity especially in the later years of his reign, which his name has carried every since. Two of his assistants in financial matters, Sir Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley, were so unpopular that they were executed early in the next reign.

The final test of the solidity of Henry's work could not come until his death, when a peaceful succession would crown his work or a new outbreak of civil war would destroy it. On April 21, 1509, the king died, and the uneventful accession of his son Henry to the throne showed that the old king had done his work well.

The new king, Henry VIII, who was approaching his eighteenth birthday at the time of his accession, was a brilliant and popular young man. He had fair hair and skin and was regarded as very handsome. Athletic and learned, he displayed a taste for theology and for humanistic letters. He was fond of music and was both a composer and a performer. One of the earliest acts of his reign was to marry Catherine of Aragon in June and carry out a wish expressed by his father toward the end of his life. The new queen was almost six years older than her husband, who gave every indication of being deeply devoted to her.

During the first years of his reign, Henry VIII seemed willing to devote himself to enjoyment, spending freely the hard-won treasure of his father. He seemed content in those early days to let others govern for him, retaining his father's chief advisers.

The king soon displayed an appetite for military adventure and a willingness to become

involved in the complicated diplomatic relationships of the Continental powers that departed sharply from the more prudent policy of his predecessor. Influenced partly by his wife, partly by the traditional enmity with France, he entered into alliance with his father-in-law, Ferdinand of Spain, and mounted invasions of France, which resulted in great expenditures of English money and no substantial gains. Ferdinand, with characteristic duplicity, abandoned his son-in-law when his own purposes had been achieved; Henry learned his lesson.

However, the alliance with Spain continued to be an important part of English policy for several years, after Ferdinand had been replaced by his grandson and Catherine of Aragon's nephew, who became King Charles I of Spain and Emperor Charles V. The Anglo-Spanish alliance was mutually advantageous to both countries because of their common hostility to France and, even more, because of the importance to both of trade between England and the Low Countries, which were part of Charles's empire.

The traditional conflict with Scotland continued. Indeed, the one great military success of Henry's early years was the defeat of the Scots at the battle of Flodden in 1513 when Henry was pursuing his ambitions in France and Catherine was serving as regent in his absence.

The early years of Henry VIII's reign saw the rise of Thomas Wolsey to become the king's chief minister. A man of humble birth his father was a butcher and innkeeper of Ipswich Wolsey had taken the only route by which someone of his status could make his career in government service. He had studied at a university, Oxford in his case, and had become a priest. He had served Henry VII, but his spectacular rise to power came in the new reign. By 1518 he had attained the highest secular and ecclesiastical offices; he was chancellor, archbishop of York, cardinal, and papal legate. In the latter capacity, he was the pope's personal representative, and took it on himself to dominate the church in England, treating the bishops, and even the archbishop of Canterbury, as his subordinates.

For some years he was preeminent in Henry's councils, and the chief executor of policy. It is difficult to know whether he was also a maker of policy; foreign observers thought Wolsey was the real ruler of the kingdom. But from what we know of Henry's character, as it became manifest in later years, it seems quite likely that the king knew from the beginning that he was master and that Wolsey could follow only those policies Henry originated or at least found acceptable.

Wolsey was a man of extraordinary abilities and an immense capacity for hard work. He was also proud, even arrogant, and given to lavish display. The holder of several lucrative church livings besides his archbishopric, he enjoyed vast wealth and lived magnificently, thereby exciting the envy and incurring the hostility of those who resented his power and despised his lowly birth. In the biography of Wolsey by his gentleman usher, George

Cavendish, there are hints that even Henry may have been a bit jealous of Wolsey's spectacular entertainments and was determined to outdo them.

Wolsey was widely hated. Not only did the nobles object to the power and wealth of the upstart, but the bishops resented the way that he rode roughshod over their rights. The commoners were aroused by the money that they had to pay out to support his ambitious foreign policy. Those who were shocked by the worldliness of the clergy had plenty of reason to be dismayed at Wolsey's behavior. He was a pluralist and an absentee. He had two illegitimate children, a daughter and a son; on the latter he conferred a large number of church livings. Since Wolsey represented the pope, his general unpopularity was transferred to the papacy and probably helped prepare the way for the destruction of papal authority in England.

Wolsey had an interest in education. He dissolved some monasteries and used the income to endow a new school in his native Ipswich and to found a college at Oxford. The college was later taken over by the king and named Christ Church. Wolsey did not believe in representative institutions, preferring to run things by himself. Parliament and the Convocation of the Clergy hardly met at all while he was at the height of his power.

During this period England played an active role in European politics. Wolsey's aims have been variously interpreted. One, older view has him seeking to maintain the balance of power. A. F. Pollard, his best biographer, claimed that Wolsey's diplomacy was based on adherence to the papacy. J. J. Scarisbrick believes that he sincerely wanted peace.

Wolsey and Henry adhered for some years to the Spanish alliance, but after the battle of Pavia (1525) when Charles V was on his way to dominating Italy, England joined Charles's enemies in the League of Cognac in 1527. Wolsey's growing antagonism to the emperor was based partly on the fact that the latter had failed to assist in fact frustrated Wolsey's desire to be elected pope.

In 1527 Charles's troops took Rome, put it to the sack, and made Pope Clement VII a virtual prisoner. Wolsey's diplomacy was in ruins. It was just at this time, when the pope was no longer a free agent, that Henry needed help that only a pope acting freely could supply. Henry's need for the pope at this juncture was the result of his matrimonial problems. Catherine of Aragon had not produced a male heir. She had had seven children, four of whom were boys. Of the seven only one had survived, and this one was a girl, Mary, born in 1516. By 1525 Catherine was forty years old; it was, therefore, unrealistic to expect that she would have more children. As we have seen, the Tudors and many of their subjects were obsessed by what they felt to be the imperative necessity for a male succession to insure domestic peace and to avert a return to the horrors of the Wars of the Roses.

Thus Henry had not obtained what he perhaps desired most of all, a son to succeed him. Being a religious man, in his own way, he came to believe or affected to believe that he had offended God by marrying his brother's widow, even though there was a papal dispensation. He began to contemplate the possibility of a divorce or more accurately an annulment. Since marriage was a sacrament, all matrimonial questions were dealt with by the church, which did not normally permit the dissolution of a valid marriage. To get a marriage dissolved, it was necessary to satisfy the church that there had been some canonical impediment to it. In this case, the impediment would be the fact that Henry had married his brother's widow.

Furthermore, the king was passionately in love with Anne Boleyn, who refused to be his mistress and insisted on marriage. Thus began the long and involved process, which resulted in the separation from Catherine and eventually the break with Rome. In the course of the next few years, the king's character became more clearly discernible. He was a complete egotist, determined to have his way at all costs all costs to others, at least. He rode roughshod over the lives, the feelings, and the human dignity of all who seemed to thwart his purposes, even of those who loved him most and served him most devotedly. He destroyed some of his most faithful, gifted, and noble subjects. Whether he was interested in the welfare of his people is doubtful, except to the extent that he may have thought that their welfare coincided with his.

To secure his divorce, Henry needed a legal decision from the pope declaring his marriage to Catherine null and void in canon law. This decision, if given, would mean that Princess Mary was illegitimate and that Henry had been living with Catherine for all those years in an illicit relationship. The negotiations were entrusted at first to Wolsey, who failed to get the desired result. Henry, no doubt encouraged by Anne and by those of his advisers who hated Wolsey, suspected the cardinal of dragging his feet. It is true that Wolsey was not enthusiastic about the marriage to Anne, and would have preferred that the king marry a French princess. Henry, therefore, deprived him of the office of chancellor, in which he was succeeded by Thomas More. Wolsey, still archbishop of York, went north to take up the duties of that position, which for years he had neglected. The king's suspicions and the slander of his enemies followed him, and he was arrested and ordered back to London, where he would have faced trial and no doubt death. He was spared all this by dying on the way, in Leicester Abbey, on November 29, 1530.

Whether Clement VII would have granted Henry's divorce had he not been under the preponderant influence of Charles V, we cannot know. The fact is, after 1527 Clement was in no position to defy Charles, who was Catherine's nephew, and whose honor and family sense compelled him to stand by her. Henry's efforts to persuade the pope to accede to his wishes came to nothing.

In 1528 the pope granted permission for a trial of the marriage case to be held in England, presided over by Wolsey and Cardinal Campeggio, sent from Italy for the purpose. The

court met in 1529. Catherine, summoned before it, steadfastly repudiated its jurisdiction and appealed to Rome. Before a decision could be reached, Campeggio adjourned the court until fall in conformity with the Roman practice. The court never reconvened, because the pope called the case to Rome. In desperation at getting satisfaction from the pope, who was clearly determined to drag matters out as long as he could, Henry took things more and more into his own hands.

The instrument by which the king finally achieved his wishes in the divorce crisis, and in the process led the way to a severance of English relations with the Church of Rome, was Parliament. Unlike his father and Cardinal Wolsey, Henry VIII freely used Parliament, enhancing its power while providing a firm basis for his own policies. He did not bully the Parliament or try to pack it, though the crown was able to ensure the presence of men who would present its wishes and provide leadership in getting those wishes enacted into law. Though Henry did not always get everything that he would have liked, there was a basic compatibility of views, which made his dealings with Parliament harmonious. It was the Commons that particularly responded to his wishes; the clerical members of the upper house were not always in agreement with him. The reign of Henry VIII marks an important phase not only in the rise of Parliament but also in the growth of the power of the House of Commons.

The Parliament, which met in 1529 and was not dissolved until 1536, was the Reformation Parliament, which enacted the most momentous body of legislation that had ever been produced in England. During the life of this Parliament there emerged as Henry's chief adviser Thomas Cromwell, one of the most gifted ministers in English history. After some years spent in military and business activity in Italy and the Netherlands, Cromwell had returned to England and entered Wolsey's service. After the cardinal's fall, he worked for the king. From 1532 onwards he began to accumulate offices, including that of principal secretary in 1534. In 1536 he became lord privy seal and was made a baron.

In the early stages of the Reformation Parliament, laws were passed against certain abuses in the church, such as pluralism and nonresidence. The purpose of these enactments was presumably to put pressure on the pope to accede to the king's wishes for fear of something worse. If so, they did not succeed; the pope would not or could not release Henry from his marriage.

From 1532, the legislation became more radical, perhaps under Cromwell's influence. In the next two years, the ties that bound England to Rome were severed. The payment of annates to the pope was cut off. Appeals from English courts to the Roman Curia were forbidden; all ecclesiastical cases were to be settled in English courts. Finally, in 1534, by the Act of Supremacy, the king was named "the only supreme head in earth of the Church of England."

The process of stripping the pope of his power in England did not mean any increase in independence for the English church; rather it diminished that independence by substituting the rule of a distant pope with the rule of the king. Among other things the acts of the Reformation Parliament gave the crown the right to approve all future canons, or laws made by the church, and to submit existing canons to review. Payments withheld from Rome were to go into the royal treasury. The Act in Restraint of Appeals of 1533, in a remarkable preamble, which may have come from the hand of Thomas Cromwell, set forth the principle of the modern sovereign state, unified under one government and recognizing no allegiance to any external authority.

This law facilitated the trial of the divorce case by a purely English court, and such a trial was held in the same year, presided over by the new archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, who was Henry's man through and through. A longtime foe of the Roman headship of the English church and a firm adherent of the royal supremacy, Cranmer was perhaps the most faithful of Henry's servants and was rewarded by his master's support and protection to the end. The result of the trial was to declare null and void Henry's marriage to Catherine, and to make valid his marriage to Anne Boleyn, which had taken place secretly in January, hastened by Anne's pregnancy and the imperative need of insuring that the child of this union should be born in wedlock and thus eligible to succeed to the throne. Anne was crowned in June. The marriage was unpopular; Catherine was loved by the people, who disliked her successor.

In September 1533, Anne's child was born. To Henry's disappointment, the baby was a girl. Her father could not know that this child would be, as Elizabeth I, one of the most successful of all English monarchs. It was a son that he wanted, and at this point still hoped that Anne would bear him one. In 1534, Parliament passed an Act of Succession, the first of three such acts in Henry's reign. It declared that the issue of the king's marriage to Anne were to be recognized as legitimate heirs to the throne, and had the effect of setting aside and bastardizing Mary, as the offspring of an illegal union.

The act also authorized an oath recognizing the validity of its provisions. As this oath came to be drawn up, taking it meant repudiating the pope's authority and the validity of Henry's marriage to Catherine. Most of those who were required to swear this oath did so, impelled by whatever motives of conviction, fear, calculation or indifference may have prevailed in each case. A very small number found it so repugnant to their consciences that they faced death rather than submit. Among those martyrs were two of the most distinguished men in the country: John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, an unflinching defender of the rights of the church and staunchest friend of Queen Catherine, and Sir Thomas More, one of the most distinguished lawyers, scholars, and statesmen in England. Fisher and More went to their deaths two weeks apart, in the summer of 1535. Both have been canonized by their church.

Although the break with Rome brought money as well as power to the crown, it did not solve Henry's financial problems. Unlike his father, he was not a prudent financial manager, and his extravagant expenses, especially his adventurous foreign policy and wars, left him short of money. This appears to have been the underlying reason for the next great step in the English Reformation, the dissolution of the monasteries. There had long been dissatisfaction with the state of monastic life, a feeling that monks, friars, and nuns were not performing socially useful functions and services that would justify their continued existence. The desire for the considerable property that they controlled was also a factor. Some religious houses had already been dissolved by Wolsey and others; their income was used for charitable and educational purposes.

Whether the idea was the king's or Cromwell's, a campaign against the monasteries was undertaken starting in 1535, when visitors were sent out by Cromwell to inspect and report on the state of the religious life. The visitors sent back exaggerated reports of laziness, neglect of duty, and immorality, which were intended to make a case for the dissolution of at least some of the monastic houses. In 1536, Parliament passed a law dissolving all the monasteries worth an annual income of less than 200, and annexing their property to the crown. Within the next few years the larger monasteries were dissolved one by one until by 1540 there were no religious houses left in England.

The end of monastic life had been such a prominent feature of the English landscape for many centuries and was, no doubt, a fact of enormous and even revolutionary importance; but this importance is not susceptible to easy measurement. It has been both asserted and denied that religion in England lost much. What is undeniable is that a vast transfer of property took place. Henry found himself compelled to sell much of the former monastic holdings to meet his continued financial needs, and the result was that a great many individuals acquired monastic property. For some families, this was an important step in their rise to wealth and prominence. For the purchasers in general, it meant an incentive to support the break with Rome and to oppose any return of papal jurisdiction, which might mean the surrender of newly acquired land.

The dissolution of the smaller monasteries in 1536 helped to precipitate the one serious uprising against the government of Henry VIII. It took place in the north of England, the most conservative part of the kingdom, where the great families like the Percys retained much of the old feudal allegiance and where the old religion had not been undermined by the newer currents. Grievances were manifold: The religious changes, the harsh treatment of the Princess Mary, the apparent ascendancy of Thomas Cromwell, and now the attack on the monasteries, were some of the factors contributing to discontent. The trouble started in Lincolnshire, and soon spread to Yorkshire, which became the center of the movement. The religious element in the uprising is seen in the name given to it, the Pilgrimage of Grace. The most important of the leaders was Robert Aske, a lawyer who came from a gentry family in the north.

The Pilgrimage of Grace was unquestionably a serious crisis. Henry had no standing army, and the troops he finally mustered were outnumbered by the pilgrims. In these circumstances the king chose to temporize and to negotiate rather than to risk battle. He sent the duke of Norfolk to deal with the rebels. Playing on their loyalty to the king and a promise of the royal pardon for all but the leaders, Norfolk persuaded the rebels to disband and return home. Henry made no attempt to redress their grievances or even consider them seriously and a recurrence of trouble early in 1537 gave him an excuse for executing Aske, who had nothing to do with this renewed outbreak. During the course of the rising, the king had promised to make a trip to the North but failed to do so.

Early in 1536 Catherine died, after years of pitiless neglect and mistreatment by Henry. Anne Boleyn did not long survive her. Anne had failed to produce a male heir, Henry had grown tired of her, and his eye had fallen on Jane Seymour. Anne was tried on charges of adultery and incest, condemned to death, and beheaded on May 19. Whether she was guilty or not can probably never be determined exactly. Fifteen days later Henry married Jane, who in the following year gave birth to Henry's long-desired son, the future Edward VI. Jane failed to recover from the effects of childbirth and died shortly thereafter.

Henry married three more times, but none of the subsequent marriages produced offspring. Anne of Cleves, a German princess, proved so unattractive that he had the marriage annulled. Catherine Howard proved unfaithful and was beheaded. Catherine Parr outlived the king.

In 1540 came the fall of Thomas Cromwell. The exact causes are still not quite clear. He had arranged the ill-fated marriage with Anne of Cleves to provide Henry with German Protestant connections against the danger of a French-Spanish rapprochement. Henry was firmly opposed to Protestantism, the Spanish and French resumed their conflict, and Anne proved unattractive. Cromwell had powerful enemies at court eager to seize on any opportunity to discredit him in the eyes of the king. It is likely that the charge that weighed most heavily against him in Henry's eyes was the charge of heresy, which the king could not abide.

In spite of perhaps in part because of his break with Rome, Henry always considered himself orthodox in religion. In 1539 Parliament passed the so-called Act of Six Articles, which set forth some of the required articles of religious faith for Englishmen; these were all strictly Catholic in nature, and very harsh penalties were set forth for departing from them. Though the act was never strictly enforced, it gives some indication of the religious tightrope the English had to walk: repudiation of papal authority and acceptance of Catholic doctrine. In 1538 Henry authorized placing an English Bible in each parish church, but in 1543 the reading of the Bible was restricted to the wealthier classes.

In these circumstances the question naturally arises whether a religious revolution had

actually taken place in England. The answer is that there had indeed been a revolution, but it was not doctrinal. It consisted in the fact that the supreme authority in religion in England had passed into the hands of laymen, the king, and Parliament. This was a change so drastic that it offended not only Catholics, but also such reformers as Luther himself.

This assumption of responsibility for religion made it necessary to establish some sort of settlement that would be acceptable to as many Englishmen as possible, in order to avoid strife. Thus a number of attempts at such a settlement were made after the ties with Rome had been severed; as has been shown, the tendency was toward a more conservative outlook as Henry grew older. In this area, neither Henry nor his two immediate successors achieved permanent success; not until the reign of Elizabeth was a stable arrangement reached.

In his last years, Henry resumed a policy of war with both France and Scotland. In Scotland, his army won a great battle at Solway Moss in 1542, but Henry did not know how to maintain his advantage. Instead, his harsh treatment of the Scots helped to push Scotland into the arms of France.

Henry VIII died on January 28, 1547. He had attained a more absolute authority than almost any other ruler of England. He had led England with remarkably little disturbance through an epoch-making change in church and religion, from which he emerged as supreme head of the church. He had helped to found the English navy. He had played an active but rather futile part in European diplomacy. He had dissipated the carefully husbanded resources of his father, largely in wars from which England gained nothing. He had done little or nothing for learning, education, literature, or art. He had superintended the destruction of some of his ablest and noblest subjects. Opinions of Henry differ and will no doubt continue to do so. For some, he is a ruthless destroyer of the beautiful and valuable; to others, he seems a great king.

That he was not so Catholic as may appear is indicated by the fact that, in selecting the men who were to educate his successor, and in choosing in his will a Council of Regency to rule until the new king came of age, Henry gave preference to men who were inclined toward Protestantism. The new monarch, Edward VI, was not yet ten years old at the time of his accession. His father's attempt to govern England from the grave, as it were, did not succeed. The king's uncle, Edward Seymour, who became duke of Somerset, managed by acting quickly to have himself named Lord Protector.

Protector Somerset was a man of noble intentions, who earnestly sought the welfare of ordinary Englishmen. In religion, he was Protestant, and extremely tolerant by the standards of the time. He was one of the ablest generals of the day. Yet he was hampered by his own difficult personality, which antagonized his colleagues on the council and which became even more of a handicap as the exercise of power tempted him into the use

of arbitrary methods. He also alienated the affections of the young king; Somerset apparently had no skill at understanding or managing a young boy.

Edward VI, in his tragically short life, displayed remarkable qualities that might have made him, had he lived, an outstanding king. His intelligence was precocious. He early displayed a great interest in governmental affairs and drew up plans for the reform of administration. He was not of a devout nature, though he was clearly Protestant in sympathy. Calvin had great hopes for him. There was a coldness about him, which in a way is typically Tudor. In his diary he recalled without apparent emotion the execution of his uncle, Protector Somerset, who had been in charge of his upbringing for a long time it must be remembered that he apparently did not much like his uncle.

Until the fall of 1549 the government was dominated by Edward Seymour. In 1547, he invaded Scotland, where the English position had deteriorated seriously. Soon after crossing the border, he met the Scottish forces in the battle at Pinkie (September 10), which brought great slaughter of the Scots. Interestingly enough, Somerset's attitude toward Scotland was far from hostile. In fact, he wanted to help bring about a union between the two countries, and was anxious, as had been Henry VIII before him, to arrange a marriage between the young king of England and the even younger queen of Scotland, Mary Stuart. Not unnaturally, his methods had quite a different effect from the one he intended. The Scots were driven even closer to France, and the French responded to their call for help by sending in troops in 1548. The young queen was sent from Scotland to France, where she later married the heir to the French throne. In 1549 the bulk of the English forces was withdrawn; the Scottish expedition was a failure.

The withdrawal of English troops in 1549 was caused by the outbreak of war with France, a war which was unsuccessful and humiliating for the English. For a long time to come, England was to be impotent in foreign affairs.

In 1549, there were uprisings in various parts of the country, due partly to economic and partly to religious factors. The economic grievances included resentment at enclosures, while the religious motivation was the introduction of a new service book, the Book of Common Prayer, the work of Cranmer. By the Act of Uniformity of that year, all services in the Church of England were to be conducted in accordance with this new liturgy, and to be in English. It may have been the change in language, more than anything else, that offended conservative religious attitudes in Cornwall and Devon, where the so-called Prayer Book Rebellion took place.

These risings helped to bring about the overthrow of Protector Somerset, who was arrested in the fall of 1549 and executed on trumped up charges in January 1552. The leader of the forces against him was John Dudley, duke of Northumberland, who became the most powerful man in the government until the end of Edward's reign. A ruthless and

dangerous man, he was hated and despised by great numbers of people, and feared by his colleagues. During his period of dominance, conditions in England did not improve. The country remained humiliatingly weak in foreign relations. The economy was in bad shape as the coinage was debased. The rulers of the country enriched themselves by plundering the property of the church.

In religion, Northumberland's policy was to move in a more Protestant direction. This was also the way in which Cranmer's thought was evolving, as can be seen in the revised edition of the Book of Common Prayer, which appeared in 1552. It was more Protestant than the earlier version. The 1549 edition had been so ambiguous on the subject of the communion service that it was used as a subterfuge for continuing to perform the Mass. This ambiguity was now removed. In other ways also the trend was unmistakably toward Continental Protestantism.

From about January 1553, Edward VI was sick with what proved to be his fatal illness. As it became clear that he could not long survive, the prospect of the accession of his sister Mary presented itself. Mary, who was Catholic, had not been well treated during the reign of Edward. If she became queen, the outlook for the Protestant church would be very uncertain. In the closing weeks of Edward's reign, a plan was devised whereby Mary would be set aside in favor of Lady Jane Grey, the young granddaughter of Henry VIII's sister Mary. It was arranged that Lady Jane Grey should marry Guildford Dudley, son of the duke of Northumberland, and be proclaimed queen. A document was drawn up to this effect, and signed in the king's presence by the leading men in the kingdom.

It has generally been believed that the contriver of this desperate scheme was the duke of Northumberland, but Professor W. K. Jordan has put forth the interesting and arresting theory that it was the young king himself who originated the scheme and forced Northumberland into attempting to carry it out, thereby, as it happened sealing his own destruction. When Edward died, on July 6, 1553, Northumberland proclaimed Lady Jane queen of England. In this crisis, Mary showed courage and stood firm. Support for her cause soon became widely apparent, while it became equally evident that Northumberland was so much hated that he could not hope to succeed. His movement collapsed, Mary became queen and the unfortunate Lady Jane and her husband were put into the Tower. Mary was unmerciful, executing Northumberland, who went to his death claiming to be Catholic. Two of his accomplices were also executed.

Unfortunately, Mary did not understand the reasons for her enthusiastic acceptance by the English people. They saw in her the legitimate successor to Henry VIII, and they hated the duke of Northumberland. They did not, however, signify approval of her religious sympathies. Mary, unlike the more gifted Tudor rulers, lacked a real understanding for or sympathy with the people. She was thirty-six at the time of her accession, and had led a life that could not have prepared her to be queen. She was deeply perhaps fanatically devoted to the Catholic church and to the memory of her mother, Catherine of Aragon,

whom she revered as a martyr. Thus she regarded the restoration of the papal obedience as her chief task.

She was unmarried when she became queen. Negotiations had been carried on from time to time concerning her possible marriage; at one time she had been betrothed to her cousin, Charles V. Now she was anxious to marry Charles's son, Prince Philip, the heir to the Spanish throne. She held on to this plan with blind and dogged persistence, ignoring the distaste of her subjects for a Spanish marriage. In her dark days Mary had turned to Charles for support and counsel. Charles, who was a true Hapsburg in his use of marriage as a diplomatic device, was eager to seize this opportunity to extend Hapsburg influence to England, with the prospect that one of his descendants would some day mount the English throne.

Philip was notably less enthusiastic. He was about ten years younger than his proposed bride, and may well have known that she was not especially attractive. He was, however, an obedient son who revered his father; in any event, there was little that he could have done about it.

Before the marriage, however, a serious uprising took place in England in the attempt to prevent it. This rising, Wyatt's Rebellion, takes its name from one of its leaders, Sir Thomas Wyatt, whose father was an important poet. The rebellion was suppressed, but not until Wyatt and some of the insurgents had reached the gates of London. The revolt had come close to success. Mary showed great courage during this crisis, a courage that was greater than her prudence or her willingness to read the signs. In spite of the lessons that might have been learned from Wyatt's rising, she went ahead stubbornly with the Spanish marriage, which took place on July 25, 1554. The queen fell deeply in love with her young husband, who did not return her feeling.

The marriage treaty, severely restricting Philip's prerogatives as far as England was concerned, reflects the feelings of Englishmen about their queen's husband. One of their fears was that English interests would be subordinated to those of Spain, still the more powerful of the two countries, and to some extent this fear proved too well grounded. Philip managed to persuade Mary to join him in the Spanish struggle against France, and the result was that the French had an opportunity to attack Calais, the one remaining English possession on the Continent. The English defenders of the city fought bravely, even heroically, but its fortifications had long been shamefully neglected, and Calais fell to the French.

If Mary's reign proved disastrous in foreign affairs, it was no more successful in the field of religion. Mary's aim of reunion with Rome was not accomplished all at once. Her first Parliament in 1553 was willing to restore the religious situation essentially as it had existed at the end of her father's reign, with Catholic worship reestablished, but with the

royal headship of the church retained. It was not until her third Parliament in 1554 that Mary was able to secure return to the papal obedience. This was completed when on November 30, 1554, papal legate, Cardinal Reginald Pole, in a ceremony attended by Philip, Mary, and both Houses of Parliament, absolved the country from the sin of schism.

During the last four years or so of Mary's reign, there occurred the campaign of religious persecution that has earned the queen the epithet "Bloody Mary." Protestants were burned at the stake in numbers unprecedented in England; something like three hundred victims of both sexes and all ages died for their faith. Their deaths, instead of frightening their fellow countrymen into returning to the Roman church, caused a revulsion against the persecuting church and in favor of a religion for which so many were willing to lay down their lives.

Most of the victims were plain people, but some were leaders in English Protestantism. Hugh Latimer, a great preacher, and Nicholas Ridley, former bishop of London, died together at Oxford in 1555. As they went to their deaths, Latimer uttered his stirring and prophetic exclamation: "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace in England as shall never be put out." The most illustrious of all the martyrs was Cranmer, who also died at Oxford in 1556.

In addition to those who stayed home and suffered from her policy, there was a larger number, about eight hundred, who fled the country to await a better time. These so-called Marian exiles naturally took refuge in leading Protestant centers on the Continent, such as Geneva, and there came into contact with doctrines and practices that not only confirmed their faith but also made it even more radical. In future years they would return and help to make the Church of England Protestant.

Thus Mary had managed to produce results exactly the opposite of those for which she had hoped. One further disappointment darkened her days: her inability to bear a child who should succeed her. From time to time she was deluded into thinking that she was pregnant, but it always proved a vain hope; and as she neared the end, she was forced to recognize that she would be succeeded by her hated half-sister Elizabeth, daughter of the woman who had usurped her mother's place. It was as a lonely, defeated, and unhappy woman that she died on November 17, 1558.

The new queen, who had turned twenty-five a couple of months earlier, had been reared in a difficult school. Her mother had been executed by order of her father; she had had to adjust herself to numerous changes in the official religion; and during the reign of her half-sister she had been in mortal danger. There had been plots against Mary, including Wyatt's Rebellion, and Elizabeth was suspected of complicity in them. For a while she was imprisoned in the Tower in connection with Wyatt's Rebellion, but nothing could be proved against her and she was released; either she was innocent or she had been prudent.

Such experiences had taught her a good deal. She had learned to keep her thoughts and intentions to herself, and to be hesitant to trust anybody. Her qualities, innate and acquired, were well suited to the times. She was above all prudent and cautious, preferring if possible to solve problems by postponing action rather than by committing herself too strongly. She was intensely political, interested in the welfare and security of her country; unlike her half-sister and some of her contemporaries in other countries, she would never subordinate national interests to confessional considerations.

Her personal religious outlook, indeed, is difficult to fathom. It is unlikely that she had intense religious feelings. Her policy, as distinct from her personal feelings, was, as will be seen, conservative. She was parsimonious with both money and honors, apparently believing that men should serve her and England without considerations of reward. She was on the whole an excellent judge of men, and surrounded herself with able and dedicated advisers. She loved flattery, and her male courtiers were expected to treat her as an object of romantic adoration. She sometimes showed a fondness for handsome young men, but this did not normally cause her to give positions of responsibility to those unfit to bear them. She combined intelligence and courage, but lacked the cruelty of which her father had been capable.

She needed all her good qualities. She came to the throne of a country that had lost its prestige in foreign affairs and counted for little in European politics.

The treasury was empty, and the country's defenses were crumbling. The queen of Scotland was married to the heir of the French throne; and Mary's mother, a member of the powerful French family of Guise, was regent of Scotland. The persecutions of Mary Tudor had not solved the religious problem, but had made a solution more urgent than ever. It also was universally believed that a woman could not rule successfully and that the queen should marry soon. Children were needed of this prospective marriage, moreover, to assure a peaceful succession and avoid the twin dangers of civil war and foreign intervention.

The religious problem was dealt with in the first Parliament, which met in 1559. By this time many of the Protestant exiles from Mary's reign had returned, confirmed in their faith and determined to move the established church in the direction of their views. According to the interpretation of J. E. Neale, which is now more or less the standard one, these people were represented in the House of Commons by a powerful minority, which succeeded in forcing upon the queen a settlement more Protestant than she would have wished.

The settlement was chiefly embodied in two laws. The Act of Supremacy made the ruler the supreme governor of the Church of England, thus restoring the royal headship and abolishing once more the authority of the pope. The Act of Uniformity restored the Prayer

Book of 1552; that is, the one more advanced in its Protestantism. This settlement was the first one that brought a solid measure of religious concord after the upheavals of the reign of Henry VIII, and it has remained, with modifications and interruptions, the basis for the Church of England as it still exists today.

This longevity could hardly have been predicted at the time, because the Elizabethan settlement could hardly have struck anyone as ideal. To the Roman Catholics, its repudiation of the papal supremacy made it completely unacceptable. To the more militant Protestants, it was condemned by its retention of vestiges of "popery." The queen was, therefore, faced with problems from both ends of the religious spectrum: At one end were the Catholics. At the other were the unsatisfied Protestants, who came to be called, among other names, Puritans.

The Puritans, in Elizabeth's reign, tended to be Calvinistic in doctrine. It was not primarily their doctrinal ideas, however, that made them unhappy with the established religion as much as their views on religious ceremonial and church polity, or government. They believed in a simple church service, centered around the sermon; the church edifice itself, in their view, should be free of the elaborate ornamentation sometimes found in churches of the old faith. Images and relics of the saints they rejected, as well as the elaborate vestments worn by the priests. Early in Elizabeth's reign came the so-called Vestiarian Controversy, in which the Puritans waged a fruitless campaign against priestly vestments. Their dislike of outward ceremony extended even to the rejection of the use of the ring in the marriage ceremony and the sign of the cross in baptism.

With respect to church polity, the Puritans were opposed to government by bishops. They differed among themselves as to the proper form of church government to substitute for the episcopal form. In Elizabeth's time the predominant party among the Puritans was that of the presbyterians. They wanted a church governed by an ascending series of representative bodies of the local congregation to regional assemblies with a national assembly at the top of the structure. This form had two distinguishing characteristics. First of all, the government of the church would be representative, rather than monarchical or hierarchical, as in the Church of Rome and the established church in England. Second, laymen would participate, since the governing committees would be made up of lay elders, or presbyters. Among the leaders of the presbyterian party in Elizabeth's reign, the most prominent was Thomas Cartwright, who lost his professorship at Cambridge because of his views.

It must be understood that the presbyterians were not proposing to separate church and state by overthrowing the institution of the established church. On the contrary, they wanted to take over the established church and remodel it in accordance with their own convictions. There was a party that wanted to separate from the established church, and they were appropriately known as separatists. The best known among them in Elizabeth's reign was probably Robert Browne. The separatists were congregationalists; that is, they

believed that the individual congregation should govern itself.

It may be said of the Puritans that, whatever their specific ideas may have been on the points in dispute, they were people who believed that each individual lives at every moment in the eyes of the Lord. Every act, every thought and feeling, even the most fleeting impulse, though secret from one's fellowmen, was known to the Almighty and under His judgment. The Puritans were characterized above all by their moral character, their striving for righteousness.

They also differed from those who regarded certain ideas and practices as being "things indifferent," on which Christians might disagree without danger to salvation and without leaving the church. These "things indifferent" were known as adiaphora, and the Church of England came to have a strong Adiaphoristic tradition. For the Puritans, little or nothing was considered indifferent; thus they made issues out of matters that to many others did not appear to be worth the trouble.

Throughout the reign of Elizabeth, the Puritans and their sympathizers, who included members of the nobility, pushed for their program in Parliament and elsewhere. They met at every turn with one immovable obstacle the queen. Elizabeth could not tolerate any body of opinion that contested her authority, and the Puritans threatened her authority in the church. On the other hand, she could not afford to suppress them too harshly, because they were among her most loyal and devoted subjects. An attempt to set up a secret presbyterian organization throughout the country was uncovered and broken up. A secret press that issued a series of scurrilous tracts against the official church the Marprelate tracts was discovered and destroyed. But Puritanism survived to become a factor of enormous importance in the seventeenth century and to leave a permanent mark on the English character.

There were probably fewer Catholics in England than there were Puritans, but in some ways the Catholic problem was a more difficult one for the government, because of its implications for foreign affairs. Since the number of Catholics in England and their real loyalties could not be known, there was always a lurking fear that, in the event of an invasion by one of the great Catholic powers, England would face not only the enemy from abroad but also a grave danger from within. In these circumstances, as compared with some other countries placed in similar situations, the government of Elizabeth was remarkable for its coolness and refusal to yield to hysteria.

The queen herself was remarkably tolerant for her times. She claimed that she did not want to make windows into men's souls that is, she did not care what her subjects thought in the matter of religion, as long as they conformed outwardly by attending the services of the established church. For the first dozen years of her reign, Catholics were to a large extent left alone. The situation changed in 1570, when Pope Pius V excommunicated

Elizabeth and released her subjects from their allegiance to her.

This attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of a heretical state by turning subjects against their ruler was typical of the papacy of the Counter Reformation, which did not hesitate to use intrigue, dissensions, and even assassination against Protestant rulers. In 1571 the English Parliament passed laws aimed at Catholics. It became treason to affirm that Elizabeth was not or ought not to be queen, or that she was a heretic, schismatic, tyrant, or usurper. It was also treason to introduce papal bulls and other instruments from Rome. From then on, some Catholics became recusants that is, they absented themselves from the services of the Church of England.

In 1568, William Allen, an English Catholic in exile on the Continent, set up an English college at Douai to train priests for the reconversion of England. These young men, knowing that they were seeking martyrdom, flocked to the seminary, and more such schools were opened in other cities. Many of these men, returning to England, were caught and put to death, but more kept coming. By 1580 over one hundred seminary priests were in England.

In 1580, the first Jesuits arrived in England. They were backed by Pope Gregory XIII, who was determined on the destruction of Elizabeth. The Jesuits were able and dedicated men and very effective both in the work of conversion and in strengthening the faith and morale of those who were already Catholic. Their appearance in the country brought a tightening of governmental measures against Catholics. During the next few years, recusancy became subject to extremely heavy fines, attendance at Mass was punished by fine and imprisonment, and conversion to the Catholic faith was treason. All Jesuits and other priests were ordered out of the country on pain of treason.

It is often pointed out in favor of Elizabeth's tolerance that no Catholics were executed for heresy in her reign. Those who were put to death were charged with treason. Many received lesser penalties, such as fines, prison, and banishment. Yet the fact remains that, whatever the charges may have been, their offense was being Catholic. It is difficult to prove that they were really a danger to the state, because they came to England as loyal subjects, without subversive political purposes. The Jesuits were forbidden to speak against the queen or to discuss politics. Anyone who reads the Jesuit John Gerard's account of his work in England must be impressed by his nobility and devotion and by the unsavory character of the professional Catholic-hunters, or pursuivants. He tells of the wretched conditions under which Catholics were imprisoned, and vividly describes the tortures to which he was subjected. The tragedy is that the government and the priests were talking two different languages, completely failing to understand one another. For the government, religion was to be considered simply in the light of politics. For the priests, nothing mattered except men's souls.

Yet there was a political danger from Catholics. In 1569 came the Revolt of the Northern Earls, a plot against Elizabeth involving some of the great noblemen, including the duke of Norfolk, the highest in rank of all Englishmen outside the royal family. It had as its purpose the overthrow of Elizabeth and the Protestant establishment, and the restoration of the old church. Mary Stuart, queen of Scotland, now a prisoner in England, was to be freed and placed on the throne. This rising was crushed, but only after it had become very serious.

The problem of Mary Stuart complicated all of Elizabeth's other problems. In 1568 she arrived in England after being deposed from the throne of Scotland. As the nearest heir to Elizabeth and a Catholic, she was the natural rallying point of Catholic discontent. Mary involved herself in one intrigue and plot after another in the effort to gain her freedom and the throne of England. Elizabeth's unmarried status made her particularly vulnerable, because her life alone stood between Mary and the crown.

After being a party to a number of plots against Elizabeth, Mary finally implicated herself so deeply in the Babington Plot of 1586 that she was tried and found guilty. The clamor for her execution, which had been growing for years, became more insistent than ever. In spite of Elizabeth's reluctance to execute a queen, Mary was finally beheaded on February 8, 1587.

The following year saw the sailing of the great Spanish fleet, the Armada, against England. English relations with Spain had been deteriorating since the death of Mary Tudor. Conflicts had been taking place in the New World, with the Spanish attempting to protect their imperial trade monopoly against English interlopers like John Hawkins. In the Netherlands, where a revolt against Spanish rule had been going on for years, the English had been helping the rebels. At first the aid was unofficial, but after the assassination of William of Orange in 1584 (See Chapter 18), Elizabeth intervened openly.

Philip had been preparing for an invasion of England since 1585, but his preparations were broken up and the invasion delayed when Francis Drake in 1587 raided the harbor of Cadiz and did grave damage to the Spanish fleet. By the following year the Armada was ready to sail. It was a formidable assemblage of 130 ships, and posed a real threat. However, the defeat of the great Spanish fleet was brought about by deficiencies in Spanish planning, the greater firepower and maneuverability of the English ships, and the conditions of the weather. The Spaniards were prepared to fight the older type of sea battle, in which the aim was to grapple the enemy ships, land soldiers on their decks, and fight what amounted almost to a land battle on the sea. The English, however, used a different method. Their ships stood off and, with their bigger guns, fired at the enemy's ships. The war did not end with the Armada, but continued indecisively until after the deaths of both Elizabeth and Philip II.

The help that England gave to the Protestant rebels in the Low Countries illustrates a prominent feature of Elizabeth's foreign policy. Surrounded by potential enemies, England had to take advantage of any opportunities to embarrass them. One such opportunity arose when Protestant rebellions broke out. Elizabeth's motives were not religious; she did not see herself as the champion of the Protestant cause, as some of her advisers would have wished. Her interest was always in the security of England. It was in the interests of England's security that Elizabeth got involved not only in the revolt of the Netherlands against Spain, but also in the affairs of Scotland and France. In the case of relations with France, Elizabeth had two weapons. One was the Wars of Religion, the other her own status as an unmarried queen. Catherine de' Medici, the French Queen Mother, had a number of sons, three of whom became kings of France. Two of these sons were proposed at different times as suitors for the hand of Elizabeth. The more serious negotiations involved the duke of Alençon, who later became duke of Anjou, but never king. He was more than twenty years younger than Elizabeth; nevertheless, he wooed the queen on various occasions with what appeared to be serious intentions. In the long run the negotiations came to nothing. To this day we cannot know how seriously Elizabeth ever considered marrying him.

In 1562, civil war broke out in France between the Catholics and the Protestants, known as Huguenots. The French Wars of Religion, as will be shown in the next chapter, lasted for more than three decades, devastating France and weakening the monarchy. By rendering the French incapable of external aggression, the situation proved advantageous to England. Once more, national interest rather than religious sympathy drew Elizabeth to the side of the rebels. English subjects who wished to fight on the side of the Huguenots were not discouraged from doing so. In 1572, the English were horrified by the news of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of Protestants. This increased their fears of a great international Catholic conspiracy and further aroused sympathy for Protestants. Later, when Henry of Navarre, the future Henry IV, became the leader in the French Protestant cause, Elizabeth assisted him with money, thus helping him eventually to mount the French throne.

One of the reasons for England's vulnerability, and a source of anxiety to Elizabeth's subjects, was her unmarried state. At first, there was the fear that, as a woman, she was incapable of ruling by herself and needed a man at her side. Elizabeth's qualities as a ruler managed to dispel this fear, but there remained the worry about the succession that plagued the entire Tudor period. What sort of internal chaos and external attack would follow if the queen should die unmarried and childless: Elizabeth's parliaments brought up the question of the succession a number of times, urging her to marry, but she always managed to avoid marriage. The queen had always refused to name her successor; knowing, as she put it, that it would cause people to abandon the setting for the rising sun. Shortly before her death, she named James VI of Scotland, son of Mary Stuart, as her successor. Elizabeth died on March 24, 1603, and the Elizabethan Age, as well as the Tudor Age, came to an end.

During the reign of Elizabeth, England's horizons expanded far beyond the island kingdom as English sailors struck out across the seas in all directions. Their motives included the search for new trade opportunities, the fight against Spain, the love of knowledge and adventure, and, in at least a few cases, some faint intimations of England's imperial possibilities.

The Elizabethan sailors were carrying on in this field an impulse that had begun earlier. After the hiatus of Henry VIII's reign, activity resumed under Edward VI. John Dudley, duke of Northumberland, was the leader in this movement. One of its results was an expedition led by Richard Chancellor and Sir Hugh Willoughby to find a northeast passage to Asia by sailing through the North Cape. Willoughby died in the attempt, but Chancellor found the White Sea, the town of Archangel, and the route to Moscow. There he established relations with Tsar Ivan the Terrible. The result was the foundation of the Muscovy Company in 1555 for trade with Russia.

This in turn led to the establishment of commercial relations with Persia, through the efforts of Anthony Jenkinson, who worked for the Muscovy Company and reached Persia in 1561, obtaining a trade agreement with the shah. When the Turkish conquest closed the route by which Persian goods had been reaching England, the English entered into an agreement with Turkey, which led to the foundation of the Turkey Company in 1581. In 1538 a Venice Company was founded to trade with Venice and her possessions, and in 1592 the amalgamation of the Turkey and Venice Companies brought about the creation of the Levant Company.

Interest also existed in the Far East. Ralph Fitch, who left England in 1583, reached Agra, Bengal, Burma, and Malacca, returning to England in 1591 to find that he had been given up for dead. In 1600 the English East India Company was founded. When its first fleet went out to the East in the same year, it marked the beginning of an amazing career that was to be inseparably linked for centuries to English imperial expansion in Asia.

Attempts by Martin Frobisher and later by Sir John Davis were made to find a northwest passage to Asia. Although they did not find what they were seeking, their voyages added significantly to geographical knowledge.

Some Englishmen became interested in the possibilities of the New World of America as a place for English settlement and English trade. Sir Humphrey Gilbert in 1583 set out to establish a permanent settlement in Newfoundland, but his death ended the scheme. His half-brother, Walter Raleigh, was also passionately interested in the New World. In 1585 a settlement sponsored by him was made at Roanoke Island, but the settlers returned in 1586. In 1587 Raleigh sent out another group, but it vanished completely, for causes that remain mysterious. This was the famous "Lost Colony."

Of all the Elizabethan voyages, one of the most spectacular was Francis Drake's circumnavigation of the world from 1577 to 1580. Since Drake had been devoting himself for years to fighting Spain, until his very name struck fear into Spanish colonies in the New World, it is likely that one of his main purposes was to attack the enemy once again, especially since he brought back a great treasure that he had plundered from the Spanish. He may also have had some commercial and colonial purposes in mind. He landed on the coast of California near San Francisco, claiming that area for the queen. He also made a trade treaty with the sultan of the islands in the Moluccas. In 1586-88, Thomas Cavendish led another circumnavigation.

When the queen died, England possessed no overseas territory, yet the seeds of the empire had been planted. Whether it was England's island location, the spirit of her seamen, the vision of men like Gilbert and Raleigh, or the genius of the queen, a start had been made on the process which was to build the British Empire.

SCOTLAND

The condition of Scotland at the beginning of the sixteenth century has been described as "feudal anarchy," as "a poor, primitive, and far-away country which the civilized nations of Europe regarded with contempt and romantic fascination."¹¹ The kings, members of the Stuart family, were unable to dominate the nobles, who possessed the preponderant political power. In external relations, perhaps the most constant factor was the age-old hostility with England, complemented by the long-standing alliance with France.

As far as the Scottish church was concerned, there was a widespread and insistent demand for reform, centering on the lives and behavior of the clergy, rather than on any demand for changes in theology or ritual. Monastic life was in decline. While monks were not, on the whole, guilty of flagrant immorality, they tended to live in idleness and comfort, paying little attention to their religious calling or intellectual pursuits. The nunneries were in even worse condition: The nuns were illiterate, and discipline had almost completely broken down. The friaries maintained somewhat higher standards: Most of the preaching in Scotland was done by friars.

One of the most serious problems arose from the neglect of the parish churches. The revenue of these parishes was being diverted to other types of ecclesiastical foundations; consequently, there were insufficient funds to pay qualified priests, and the intellectual and moral level of the parish clergy was, therefore, low. Surviving records of the large number of legitimations of the children of priests testify to a laxity of moral standards among the secular clergy.

In contrast to the poverty of the parish priests was the wealth of some of the more fortunate members of the clergy: cathedral canons, bishops, abbots. To add to the abuses,

these lucrative positions were often kept within one family, and many noble families drew a good part of their incomes from the control of church offices.

The greatest beneficiary of lay interference in the Scottish church was the crown. After England's break with Rome in the reign of Henry VIII, the papacy was so anxious not to lose the obedience of the church in Scotland that it virtually surrendered control to the king. The crown took full advantage of its opportunities, appointing members of the royal family to lucrative positions and using church property and income freely for its own purposes.

In these conditions Protestant ideas began to make headway in Scotland, entering the country at first from the German towns of the Hanseatic League. The first documentary evidence of this is a law passed by the Scottish Parliament in 1525 against Lutheran works. The first martyr in Scotland was Patrick Hamilton, burned in 1528. Other executions followed, the most notable being that of George Wishart in 1546.

The religious situation in Scotland, as elsewhere, had political connections. Protestantism was associated with the pro-English party, while the Catholic party was anti-English and hence pro-French. Not long after the execution of Wishart, Cardinal David Beaton, archbishop of St. Andrews and the leader of the Catholic and anti-English party, was murdered in St. Andrews Castle (May 29, 1546). The murderers were joined in the castle by a number of Protestants, among whom was John Knox who had come there in April of the previous year.

John Knox (c.1514-72) is the most important of the religious leaders of the Scottish Reformation. He was ordained a priest in 1536, and about 1543 he was converted to Protestantism. In 1545 he met Wishart and became one of his followers. It was in St. Andrews in 1547 that Knox first preached. In July of that year, the French sent a fleet to St. Andrews and took the castle. Knox, along with a number of others, was taken prisoner and sent to serve in the galleys. He served as a galley slave, with harmful effects on his health, until the end of February or the beginning of March 1549.

From 1549 until the accession of Mary Tudor, Knox lived in England, preaching at Berwick and Newcastle. His preaching in Berwick encouraged the Protestants in Scotland, who had suffered a great setback when their leaders were taken by the French at St. Andrews in 1547. Many came to hear Knox preach and even remained in England to form part of his congregation.

In 1552 the duke of Northumberland, who now dominated the English government, visited the north of England. After hearing Knox preach, Northumberland invited him to come to court, where he preached before the king in the autumn of 1552. In one of his sermons at court he denounced the practice of kneeling at communion. This had been

retained in the Second Book of Common Prayer, which had been officially adopted and was due to come into force on November first. His sermon had so much influence that at the last moment, at the end of October, a statement was inserted in the Prayer Book to the effect that kneeling to receive the sacrament did not imply adoration of the bread and the wine, and that Christ was not corporally present in the elements. This statement, which became known as the "black rubric," was the first explicit official English rejection of the Real Presence, and was due to Knox's influence.

When Mary Tudor ascended the throne, Knox decided to leave England, and early in 1554 he was on the Continent. For a while he was at Frankfurt, where he became involved in conflicts with his fellow exiles that led to his expulsion from the city. He went to Geneva, where he became a Calvinist and a great admirer of Calvin.

In 1554, Mary of Guise, widow of James V, succeeded in becoming regent of Scotland. In order to consolidate her power in her new position, she found it expedient to conciliate the Protestants and tolerate, at least provisionally, the exercise of their religion. Taking advantage of this favorable turn of events, Knox returned to Scotland. He was there only from the fall of 1555 to the summer of 1556.

This trip of Knox to Scotland, brief though it was, had great significance for the future religious development of the country. He gave Protestantism a firm hold in Edinburgh, where it had not previously been strong. He unified the Scottish Protestants and made them into a militant, cohesive party with a Calvinistic doctrine. He had a very shrewd political sense, and knew that for the movement to succeed in Scotland, it must have support among the one class that determined events in that country the nobility. On this trip, therefore, he made a special point of talking to those nobles who were Protestant or receptive to the Protestant message. He succeeded to such an extent that the Protestant party was provided with a group of noble leaders, who directed the movement and, in the long run, were responsible for its success.

Among those nobles there were some whose devotion to the Protestant cause was based on sincere religious motives. One of these was Lord James Stewart, later to be earl of Moray, illegitimate son of James V, and thus a half-brother of Mary Stuart. In the years to come, Moray was to be the single greatest factor in ensuring the triumph of Protestantism in England and Scotland, and consequently made a great contribution to its survival in Europe as a whole.

It was probably only a matter of time until a clash took place between the regent, French and Catholic, and the increasingly militant Protestant party. The Scottish Protestants were encouraged by the death of the Catholic Mary Tudor in England and the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558. When Mary of Guise showed signs of abandoning her policy of toleration toward the Protestants, conflict came to a head, and in 1559 civil war broke out.

Protestantism and anti-French feeling combined in the attack on the government of Mary of Guise. The leaders of the revolt were known as the Lords of the Congregation. Also in 1559, Mary Stuart, daughter of Mary of Guise and James V, became queen of France when her husband ascended the French throne as Francis II. Mary Stuart had been queen of Scotland almost since her birth.

In October 1559, the Lords of the Congregation, in the name of Francis II and Mary, declared Mary of Guise deposed as regent. However, military success lay with Mary of Guise, who had French troops at her disposal. The only hope of the Protestants lay in getting help from England, and this help was eventually made available. With the arrival of an English fleet and army, and the death of the regent in June 1560, a settlement was reached. In the following month, the Treaty of Edinburgh provided for the removal of foreign troops and marked the victory of the Protestant, pro-English party. In the absence of the queen, Scotland was to be ruled by a council, whose leaders were Protestant.

Knox, meanwhile, back on the Continent, published *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (1558), in which he called for the English to overthrow Mary. Later he went so far as to advocate putting her to death. The *First Blast* contained an attack on rule by women, and made a permanent enemy for Knox in Queen Elizabeth. In view of the dependence of the Scottish Reformation on English help, it can only be regarded as a blunder on the part of Knox, explainable by his distance from Britain at the time and his ignorance of Elizabeth's character. When he asked for permission to travel through England in 1559 on his way back to Scotland, it was denied. Knox was back in Scotland by May of 1559.

He was quick to see that English intervention was necessary for Protestant success, and was the most active of the Scots in securing it, but his success here helped spell the decline of his influence. The direction of the Scottish Reformation was to be in the hands of political forces, the English government and the Scottish Protestant nobles.

In August of 1560 with the Protestants victorious, there took place the meeting of the Parliament, which is known in Scottish history as the Reformation Parliament. It abolished papal jurisdiction, forbade the Mass, approved a Protestant confession of faith, and authorized the compilation of a new Book of Discipline, to set up the government of the church.

Francis II and Mary refused to give their consent to the work of this Parliament, which meant that its measures were illegal. In fact, the sovereign had never consented to the calling of the Parliament, so that it had actually been illegal from the beginning. Nevertheless, it was the most important Parliament in Scottish history, and helped to establish the Reformed church as the official church of the nation.

This new church had numerous problems. Because the incumbent bishops were members of the most powerful families in the country, they could not be dispossessed, whether or not they chose to conform to the newly established faith. This meant that the property and wealth of the old church were not available to the new one, which consequently lacked adequate financial resources. Furthermore, the ruler, Mary Stuart (Francis II died in 1560), had not officially recognized it; there were for several years two ecclesiastical organizations in Scotland.

Further difficulties arose when the widowed Mary returned to Scotland to take up her position as queen. Though she found it expedient to conciliate the Protestants, she was a Catholic and hoped to restore the Catholic church in Scotland. To this end she was prepared to use force if it should ever become available, but for such force she was dependent on France or Spain. As it turned out, neither country was ever both able and willing to supply it.

With the arrival of Mary, the Scottish Reformation became even more inextricably interwoven with politics and with international relations. Had Mary Stuart triumphed over her enemies at home and succeeded in overthrowing Elizabeth in England, Protestantism might have been crushed in the British Isles, and this would have added great strength to the Catholic forces in France, Spain, and the empire. The whole future of Protestantism thus depended to some extent on the course of events in a small, poor, and backward country on the edge of European civilization.

The influence of events abroad was even felt in the religious evolution of Scotland. For some years the new church developed along the lines of the Elizabethan church in England. Bishoprics continued to exist, and the Book of Common Prayer was followed.

The presbyterian form, which became characteristic of the Scottish church, or "kirk," was a foreign importation, brought to Scotland largely by Andrew Melville, who returned from Geneva in 1574. In spite of opposition, he was able to acquire enough influence in Scotland to implant the presbyterian polity.

Seen in the British and European perspective, the deposition of Mary Stuart in 1566 marks a turning point in religious history. She was succeeded by her son, James VI, who was still a baby; and the government came into the hands of Protestant nobles. James was brought up as a staunch Protestant, though his early experiences gave him a strong bias against Presbyterians. In any event, Protestantism was, henceforth, safe in Britain, and consequently had a much enhanced prospect of survival in western Europe as a whole.



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CHAPTER 17

FRANCE 1494-1559

At the beginning of this period, France was the most powerful of the European states. This power was concentrated, to a considerable extent, in the hands of the monarchy; and it is, therefore, clear that the manner in which French kings chose to wield their strength was inevitably a vital factor in the life of Europe. For the first half of the sixteenth century down to 1559, to be exact the strength of the monarchy continued to grow within France, in relation to the other forces in French society. This strength was used by the kings in dealing with two problems, which will engage our attention in this chapter: the problem of the Hapsburgs, with whom the French crown was constantly at war, and the problem of the French Protestants, or Huguenots, whose activities began and became increasingly significant during this period.

The growth of the French monarchy had begun during the Middle Ages; medieval kings of France had demonstrated that the institutions of feudalism were capable, in strong hands, of supplying the basis for an effective centralized government. France had been blessed with many strong kings; and, for the most part, they had lived long enough to be succeeded on the throne by sons who were already mature men and thus able to carry on their fathers' policies without interruptions. In this way France had been largely spared the experience of regencies, always a source of potential danger in hereditary monarchies. The royal domain had grown in the course of centuries from the small holdings of Hugh Capet in 987, which consisted of not much more than the region around Paris, until it included the bulk of modern France. The last of the great feudal principalities, Brittany, was acquired after the death of the last duke in 1488 by warfare and by the marriage of the heiress of Brittany, Anne, to two successive French kings, Charles VIII and Louis XII.

The Hundred Years' War had for a time interrupted the growth of monarchical power, but in the long run had strengthened it. To enable the monarch to defend his realm more successfully, he was given the power to raise troops on his own authority as well as levy taxes for their support. This power was retained after the war was ended. It gave the French kings, at the beginning of modern times, two of the most important and characteristic attributes of the modern nation.

In the realm of thought, as well as in that of institutions, there were factors that contributed to the strength of the monarchy. The experience of the Hundred Years' War had helped to create a spirit of patriotic devotion among Frenchmen. From as early as the thirteenth century the writings of the legists, experts in the Roman law, had been elaborating the theoretical basis of monarchical power. At a more popular level, there had been developing the theory of the divine right of kings: the doctrine that the king is the earthly representative of God and that his word is not to be questioned or resisted. Medieval political theories had included the concept of a divine sanction for monarchy, but they had found a place for resistance to tyrannical acts that is, acts which violated divine or natural law. The theory of the divine right of kings went further and prescribed obedience to all the acts of a king, who could not be judged by his subjects or any earthly authority, but only by God.

As in other countries, so in France, by the beginning of the sixteenth century the merchant class, dominant in the cities, had undergone a change in its attitude toward the royal power. Whereas at an earlier period these men were capable of resisting the king in behalf of the liberties of their cities, they now favored the royal power and were willing to cooperate with the kings to keep in check the aspirations of the city masses.

The group of courts known as parlements had contributed to the growth of monarchical power. There were eight of these by the start of the sixteenth century, of which the most important was the Parlement of Paris, the supreme court of appeal in France and the most important tribunal in the country. The resemblance to the English word parliament is somewhat deceptive; these bodies were law courts, not legislative chambers. Their members were judges who had purchased their offices; this "venality" of offices helped to make them hereditary. The members of these courts belonged to the "nobility of the robe," as distinguished from the older feudal, military nobles, the "nobility of the sword." In fact, the parlements had helped to support the royal power in its conflict with the older nobility as well as with the church.

In one respect the parlements had what might be thought of as a political function: They had the right to register the king's edicts before they took effect. Since these edicts, or laws, were issued by the king on his own authority, the right of registration provided the only constitutional check on his law-making powers. However, the king had the prerogative of appearing personally in the parlement and holding a "bed of justice," which compelled the registration of the edict in question.

The Estates-General in France consisted of the clergy, or First Estate; the nobility, or Second Estate; and the Third Estate, which in theory represented all the rest of the population but, in fact, stood for the interests of the merchant and professional classes in the cities. There were also local estates in some of the provinces, especially those that had been annexed to the crown in relatively recent years. The first two estates were the

privileged classes; the Third Estate was the unprivileged middle class and peasants. The bulk of the taxes were paid by the unprivileged classes; the clergy and nobles, collectively very wealthy, paid far less than their proportionate share. This was a source of weakness for the royal revenue as well as a potential cause of social discontent. There was also a difference in the rate of taxation between different parts of the country, so that it might be said that there were both vertical and horizontal inequities in the French tax structure.

For the collection of some taxes, the French government resorted to corporations of tax-farmers, who paid the crown a lump sum for the privilege of collecting the taxes and keeping the proceeds. The results of this system were that the taxpayers were oppressed and the government was cheated.

There was no effective accounting system for the revenues of the crown, and so a large amount of money destined for the treasury never got there, but remained in the pockets of officials who handled it along the way. Consequently, although France was a country of great wealth, the resources of the nation were available only to a very limited degree for the pursuit of royal policies. This is only one example of an important fact of early modern history: The rising nation-states, with their growing needs, were trying to pay increasing expenses on the basis of the fiscal arrangements of the feudal period. As a result, it was normal for them to be short of money and to resort to expedients that made matters worse, such as the debasing of the coinage.

In its relationship with the church, the French monarchy had also managed to assert its authority. The struggle between Boniface VIII and Philip the Fair is one incident showing the ability of the French crown to resist successfully the claims of the papacy. During the "Babylonian Captivity" of the fourteenth century, the succession of French popes at Avignon was susceptible to the influence of the French king; and during the Great Schism that followed, the dependence of the Avignon popes on the French was increased because of the loss of much of their obedience to their rivals in Italy. At one point during the Great Schism, the French officially withdrew their allegiance from both popes, an act of extraordinary independence.

This self-assertion of the French crown in its dealings with the papacy had been accompanied by the growth of the so-called Gallican tradition of independence of the French church itself toward Rome. From the University of Paris, home of the greatest theological school in Europe, there came strong support for the conciliar idea. The conciliar movement gave the French church an opportunity to extract good terms from the pope, who needed support in his struggle with the Council of Basel. The result was the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges of 1438, an agreement between the French clergy and the pope. It asserted the superiority of general councils over popes, gave to the local chapters the authority to elect bishops and abbots in the French church, forbade appeals to Rome, and canceled most money payments to the pope. What payments remained were to have the status of free gifts.

This document governed the relations of the French church with Rome most of the time until 1516. In that year, Francis I, who was in Italy as a conqueror, reached a new agreement with Leo X, called the Concordat of Bologna. Through this treaty the king acquired the right to make appointments to the upper clergy. The right to collect annates from the French church was restored to the pope. Henceforth, the kings of France effectively controlled the church, and this fact removed one possible inducement to carry out a reformation on the English model in the sixteenth century. The authority Henry VIII gained only by breaking away from Rome was already in the hands of the French kings while still in communion with Rome.

From the standpoint of French spiritual life, however, the results of the Concordat of Bologna were less happy. The kings used their mastery of the church to reward their favorites and servants with bishoprics and abbacies, and thus the upper clergy did not give spiritual leadership. The system also helped to bring the split between the upper and lower clergy and the bitterness of the latter, which rankled until the revolution.

There were elements of weakness in the French monarchy. During the reigns of Francis I and Henry II, in the first half of the sixteenth century, royal expenses were far greater than the money available to meet them. As a result, the crown had to resort to measures that were in themselves undesirable, such as selling parts of the royal domain and, perhaps most serious of all, selling offices. Under Francis I, the sale of offices provided a regular part of the royal revenue, and before the end of the sixteenth century all offices were sold. This was the only way to secure for the crown a share of the wealth of the middle class, but it had bad effects, such as the hereditary character of offices and a great increase in their number. In the growing body of officeholders the kings were setting up an obstacle to their own power, which was never suppressed.

Although the kings had been winning a gradual ascendancy over the great nobles, the latter were by no means happy in this state of dependence. Some of them came from families that earlier had been virtually independent rulers, and such memories died hard. In any situation where the crown was weakened, these great nobles were waiting to take advantage of the opportunity to reassert their former power. Of all the classes in France, they were perhaps the least touched by the patriotic spirit, and did not scruple to resist the king.

Meanwhile, the conflict between the French and the Hapsburgs was becoming a fixture in European politics, the first great international rivalry in modern history and one of the most enduring. The story of the struggle for Italy from 1494 to 1515 has been told in a previous chapter. After his victory at Marignano in 1515, Francis I, master of Milan, enjoyed a period of dominance in northern and central Italy, which enabled him to make peace with the Swiss and the pope, who had opposed him. Henceforth, Franco-Swiss

relations were uniformly good, and the French habitually recruited mercenary troops from the Swiss cantons. With the pope, Francis made the Concordat of Bologna, referred to above. With the young Charles I, who came to the Spanish throne in 1516, Francis made a peace, which was not destined to last long.

In the imperial election of 1519, Francis put himself forward as a candidate to succeed Maximilian I. When his rival, Charles I of Spain, was elected Emperor Charles V, a complex of territories came into the hands of the Hapsburg power that virtually enclosed France on all her land borders. Thus, geography compelled the French to become enemies of the Hapsburgs.

There were many areas of conflict. Francis was established in Milan and northern Italy, Charles in Naples and Sicily. Charles hoped to regain the duchy of Burgundy, which had belonged to his great-grandfather, Charles the Bold, and which had been absorbed into the French monarchy by Louis XI. Throughout all the vicissitudes of the struggle, the French position in Italy steadily deteriorated, while Charles was never able to regain Burgundy.

During the years after Marignano, Francis was deprived of almost all of his Italian holdings and even had to meet an invasion of France. In the invasion, Charles had as allies Henry VIII of England and Constable Bourbon, one of the great French nobles whom Francis had antagonized and thereby driven into Spanish service. The invasion took place in 1524, and was successfully repulsed. Francis then returned to Italy and besieged Pavia. Here a great battle took place in 1525 on February 24, the birthday of Charles V in which the French were utterly defeated and Francis made prisoner.

The prisoner was taken to Spain, where he was compelled in 1526 to sign the Treaty of Madrid. In it Francis gave up Burgundy, relinquished his claims in Italy and Flanders, and promised to reinstate Bourbon and to marry Charles's sister Eleanor. His two sons were to remain as hostages for the fulfillment of the terms, and Francis promised to return to captivity if he failed to carry out his agreements. It is unlikely that Francis ever intended to carry out the treaty. In any event, he violated it as soon as he was free.

Charles's growing supremacy in Italy brought into action the forces of the balance of power, and in 1526 there was formed another Holy League, the League of Cognac. In addition to the pope, Clement VII, some of the other Italian states, and the French, it included in its membership Henry VIII of England. The troops of Charles V included a good many German Lutheran mercenaries, or Landsknechte, and were led by the renegade French noble the Constable Bourbon. By 1527, these troops, long unpaid, entered Rome.

The death of Bourbon in the attack on the city released the soldiers from whatever restraint he might have been able to impose, and Rome was put to the sack. For eight days the troops, with nothing to check their barbarity, pillaged, raped, destroyed, and committed acts of iconoclasm and sacrilege, in which the German Lutherans no doubt took the lead.

By 1528 the French were again driven out of Italy, and in 1529 Francis I and Charles V signed the Peace of Cambrai. Francis once more gave up his claims in Italy and Flanders, but this time Charles renounced the duchy of Burgundy, which had been awarded to him in the Treaty of Madrid in 1526. The French princes whom Charles had been holding as hostages were to be released for a payment of two million gold crowns, and Francis once more promised to marry Charles's sister, Eleanor. This time the marriage did take place, and Eleanor entered France as queen in 1530.

Francis did not give up his Italian ambitions. He maintained his alliances with the pope, the English, the German Protestants, and even the Turks. In 1535, the duke of Milan, Francesco Maria Sforza, died. He owed his position to Spanish support, and on his death Charles's troops occupied Milan, while Francis claimed it for his second son. He also claimed Piedmont for his mother, Louise of Savoy, and invaded it in 1536. Charles retaliated with an unsuccessful invasion of France. In 1538 the Truce of Nice left Francis in possession of Piedmont, with Charles holding Milan. Charles had promised Milan to a younger son of Francis, but instead gave it to his own son, Philip.

Francis resumed the war in 1542 and thereby exposed France to invasion by Charles and Henry VIII. The French, to offset this danger, won a great victory in the Piedmont. The Peace of Crpy, in 1544, required that each side give up all its conquests since the Truce of Nice, and more or less restored the status quo.

Thus, when Francis I died in 1547, the Italian policy of France, after over half a century of fighting, had resulted chiefly in strengthening the hold of Spain. On the other hand, the duchy of Burgundy was securely in possession of the French kings, in spite of Charles's desire to regain possession of it. Flanders remained a battleground, where the rival ambitions of France and Spain constituted a standing threat to the tranquillity of the native population and a constant source of concern to the English.

The failure of French ambitions in Italy was on the whole probably a source of strength to the French kings; it forced them to turn their attention from adventures in distant lands to the more feasible and necessary task of extending the French borders. After Francis's death, this process was resumed. The conflict with Charles was continued by Henry II, son and successor of Francis. In 1551 he attacked without a declaration of war. In the same year he made a treaty with Duke Maurice of Albertine Saxony, a Lutheran, in which he promised to help the German Lutherans in their struggle with Charles in return for the imperial cities of Cambrai, Metz, Toul, and Verdun. These acquisitions promised a material strengthening of the French border. The French policy of alliance with Protestant states in the endeavor to check Hapsburg power did not prevent severe persecution of Protestants within France.

The war continued for several years. Before it was over, Charles V abdicated as king of

Spain in 1556, and was succeeded by his son, Philip II. Through his wife, Mary Tudor, Philip involved England in the war on the Spanish side. In 1557 the Spanish won a great victory over the French at St. Quentin, and in the following year defeated the French again at the battle of Gravelines. Meanwhile, in 1557 the French took Calais, the last English possession on the Continent.

In 1559 peace was made. By the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrsis, the French renounced their Italian claims but gained Calais, Metz, Toul, and Verdun. In other words, Philip II compensated France at the expense of England and the empire. Mary Tudor had died in 1558, and that left Philip conveniently free to marry Elizabeth of Valois, daughter of the French king, as stipulated by the treaty. To celebrate the marriage, great festivities were held in Paris, and Henry II himself took part by breaking a lance with one of his nobles in a joust. The event proved fatal. Henry was accidentally injured and died a few days later, leaving his widow, Catherine de' Medici, and several sons whose weakness helped to reverse, for the rest of the century, the growth of the French monarchy.

Thus the year 1559 marks a turning point. Spain was now the master of Italy, and the French, though they did not abandon the Italian dream, had officially renounced ambitions there. The growth of monarchical power in France was temporarily checked. To complicate all these matters further, there was the growing problem of the Reformation in France.

In France the relationship between the Renaissance and the beginnings of the Reformation is closer than in some other places. There was, as we have seen, a group of scholars and thinkers, greatly influenced by humanism and especially by Erasmus, who were already, in the years before the Reformation, engaging in bold speculation on religious matters and discussing reform of the church. The most important and influential figure among these was Jacques Lefvre d'taples. Among those whom he influenced were Guillaume Brionnet, bishop of Meaux, and the princess Marguerite d'Angoulme, sister of Francis I. Brionnet was a reformer who came from a family of pluralists. Among his father, his brother, and himself, they held five dioceses, two archbishoprics, and three abbeys. Louis XII and Francis I employed him at the Curia in Rome, from which he returned in 1518. On his return he set out to reform his diocese. He recalled absentee priests and divided the diocese into thirty-two sections, each of which was provided with a preacher. He expressed strongly his opposition to all abuses in the religious and moral life. However, he met with such strong opposition that his program did not succeed, and he found most of his friends and co-workers going over to the side of the Reformation, a step which he himself refused to take.

Marguerite d'Angoulme, queen of Navarre, represents the currents of humanism, mysticism, and religious reform. She listened to Lefvre and corresponded with Brionnet. She was affected by the new learning of the Renaissance, she knew Italian literature, enjoyed Plato, and had his dialogues translated. A careful student of the Bible, she had an

undogmatic ideal of religion, which rejected many aspects of medieval Catholicism. She was opposed to scholasticism and the supernatural powers of the priesthood and indifferent to the Mass. She refused to worship the Virgin and the saints and was impressed by the importance of faith for justification, the uselessness of works, and man's absolute dependence on God. In spite of these ideas, so close to those of the reformers, she did not become a Protestant. At her court there were daily discussions of the Bible; she gave refuge to men whose views got them into trouble with the Sorbonne: Lefvre, Calvin, and the poet Marot.

She was an important writer and produced comedies and pastorals with a Christian message. Her *Mirror of a Sinful Soul* (1531) is a mystic work, which teaches the powerlessness of man to achieve good by himself. God can do it in us by love. The soul must reach God by immolating itself. To gain life, men must die to the flesh. Marguerite herself knew the experience of mystic ecstasy and love of God. Another side of her personality is shown in her reading of Rabelais and in her unfinished *Heptameron*, modeled on Boccaccio's *Decameron*. (See Chapter 20).

The ideas of Luther and Zwingli found a reception in France at an early date. By 1519, there were people in Paris who were sympathetic to the Reformation. However, the Sorbonne, consulted in 1521 on the subject of Luther, condemned him as a heretic, and in the same year the Parlement of Paris ordered his books to be burned. The Sorbonne regarded even Erasmus and Lefvre as heretics, and in 1523 it struck at them by condemning all versions of the Bible except the Vulgate. No 1 Bda, syndic of the Sorbonne, was one of Erasmus's foremost enemies. Louis de Berquin, who had translated works of Erasmus into French, was imprisoned by the Sorbonne in 1523, and in 1529 he was burned for heresy.

In the early years of his reign, Francis I's attitude toward the Reformed ideas fluctuated between sympathy and persecution. His difficulties in foreign affairs from 1523 to 1526, which included an invasion of France and culminated in the king's imprisonment and the Treaty of Madrid, made it necessary to gain the support of Parlement and the Sorbonne.

Therefore, Louise of Savoy, the king's mother and regent during his imprisonment, concurred in the suppression of heretical books and the appointment by Parlement of a commission to find and punish heretics. On the king's return, however, he at first favored the reform, and even appointed Lefvre as tutor to his son. In 1528, when a statue of the Virgin was mutilated, he ordered persecutions. Four years later, eager for an alliance with the German Protestants and with England, where Henry VIII was pursuing an antipapal policy, he changed again, favored reform once more, and in the royal palace of the Louvre listened to evangelical sermons.

In 1534 there occurred the famous "Affair of the Placards." These placards, attacking the Mass, were posted in various places in Paris and elsewhere, one even being found on the door of the king's bedchamber. This caused renewed persecution; many heretics were

burned, and others fled the country. It was at about this time, as we have seen, that Calvin left Paris. In 1535 it was decreed that death would be the penalty for all heretics and concealers of heretics.

Although Francis I's policy changed again after this because of his desire for alliance with the German Protestants, he became more and more consistently a persecutor of heretics. In 1538 he entered his worst period of persecution, with the Edict of Fontainebleau extending and clarifying earlier measures. In 1542-43, the Sorbonne began to issue a list of prohibited books, and the printing and selling of Protestant works was forbidden in France. In 1545 came the terrible destruction of the Waldensians in Provence, in which twenty-two villages were destroyed, some three to four thousand persons massacred and executed, and seven hundred men sent to the galleys. In 1546, the "Fourteen of Meaux" were burned at Paris. The early victims of persecution in France were primarily artisans and other persons from the humbler ranks of society.

Although the ideas of Erasmus and of Luther had been influential, it was by now clear that the Reformation in France would be Calvinist. Calvin took a special interest in the fate of his fellow countrymen. He dedicated the first edition of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in 1536 to Francis I, and in his dedicatory letter tried to persuade the king to cease from persecuting the Protestants. Calvin prepared French versions of the *Institutes*, and supplied from Geneva preachers for the communities of his followers in France. Geneva became a place of refuge for persecuted French Protestants who escaped. These French Calvinists were called Huguenots, a word of doubtful origin. Like Calvinists everywhere, they were united and strengthened by a clear-cut set of doctrinal beliefs, a systematic form of church organization and worship, and an unquenchable conviction of being God's anointed. The number of Huguenots constantly increased. Priests, monks, and schoolmasters were among the converts, and used the opportunities afforded by their positions to spread the Word.

All of this had to be done secretly, especially in the reign of Henry II. In his ferocious persecution of heretics, he resembled his enemy Philip II of Spain. In 1547, the year he came to the throne, he established in the Parlement of Paris a special chamber for the trial of heresy. It soon came to be known as the *chambre ardente* ("burning chamber") because of the character of its activity. In 1551 the comprehensive Edict of Chateaubriand dealt with matters of heresy. All public careers were closed to Protestants. No petitions for mercy from Protestants were to be allowed, and magistrates who were too lenient were made subject to prosecution. Bible reading was forbidden, as were arguments on religious matters. Informers were to receive a large share of the goods of condemned persons, and those who refused to inform were to be punished. Teachers were to be watched, and the printing of books regulated. No books from Protestant countries could be brought into France, and no books could be printed in the country that had not been approved by the theological faculty that is, the Sorbonne. The printing of anonymous books was prohibited.

Not even these severe measures satisfied the king, because some of the judges of the Parlement were too lenient for him. In 1557, he issued the Edict of Compigne, which gave jurisdiction over heresy cases to the civil courts and forbade the judges to inflict any penalty except death. Until the year of Henry's death, however, he was still faced with cases of unwelcome leniency in the courts and among the magistrates. Many French Catholics were opposed to the persecution. In 1559 Henry even had some judges of the Parlement of Paris arrested for their tendency to defend the Protestants.

In spite of all attempts at repression, the Huguenots became even more numerous and active. The prisons reserved for Protestant prisoners overflowed. In 1555 the Huguenots began to organize their church; before then there had been solitary students or small groups worshipping together. Now they adopted the Calvinistic form of church government. Each congregation had a pastor who preached, administered the sacraments, and presided over the consistory of elders and deacons. By 1567, Geneva had sent 120 pastors to the churches in France. Meetings of the congregations were, of course, held in secret, and often resulted in numerous arrests and executions.

In 1559 in Paris, a conference representing fifty Protestant churches adopted a confession of faith based on one drawn up by Calvin two years earlier. They also adopted a Book of Discipline, which established for the whole country a Calvinistic form of organization, with an ascending hierarchy of representative assemblies but with no church being allowed to claim any primacy over others. A group of congregations was under a Colloquy, over these were Provincial Synods, and for the whole country a General or National Synod.

By 1559, when Henry II was killed, the Protestants were, therefore, numerous, militant, and well organized. The unexpected death of the king left France in the hands of a number of parties and factions whose relationships largely determined the course of French history for the remainder of the sixteenth century. The king's widow, Catherine de' Medici, a Florentine and niece of Pope Clement VII, had not been loved by her husband, who had had as his mistress the famous Diane de Poitiers. With Henry's death, Catherine became a figure of great political importance, and the French scene was to be largely affected by her dominating passions: ambition for her children and a lust for political power. She was a woman of intelligence and ability but without fixed principles. She was likely to be governed by considerations of expediency and momentary advantage rather than by long-range considerations. In religious matters she was not fanatical and was perhaps inclined toward a policy of toleration for the Huguenots.

Three of her sons ruled. As Francis II, Charles IX, and Henry III they were the last Valois kings of France. These three kings had in common their lack of character and their inability to control the situation. Their weakness at a time of national crisis aggravated the tragedy through which France had to pass before peace and order were restored. A fourth

son, Francis, duke of Alençon and later of Anjou, was eager to do something spectacular, and became involved in the affairs of France, England and the Netherlands without contributing anything useful to the situations.

The Huguenots, under the influence of the nobles who were becoming leaders of their movement, were adopting the character of a political party and forming a military organization. Some of the Huguenot nobles were sincerely religious; others were motivated largely by the desire to regain the powers their ancestors had lost to the crown. Thus they took advantage of a revolutionary situation to reverse the long-term trend of French history toward a strengthening of the monarchy.

Among the great Huguenot nobles, the most highly placed were Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre, and his brother the prince of Condé. As Bourbons they were princes of the blood, related to the royal family. Neither of them was the ideal Huguenot leader. Antoine was a person of weak character, without a really firm commitment to the Protestant cause. His wife, Jeanne d'Albret, was a much stronger and more sincere Huguenot. Their son, Henry, was later to become King Henry IV. Condé was a better leader, a good military man, but restless for power and immoral in his private life.

The noblest of the Huguenot leaders was Gaspard de Coligny, who held the rather deceptive title of admiral of France. He and his two younger brothers, who had also been converted to the Protestant faith, were nephews of Anne de Montmorency, constable of France, the highest military officer in the country and chief adviser to Henry II. The constable, unlike his nephew, had remained Catholic. In character and in devotion to the cause, Coligny stands head and shoulders above the other Huguenot leaders. His adherence to the new religion was based on sincere conviction rather than self-seeking or political expediency.

The crown had to deal with the Huguenots and a faction led by the Guise family, originally from Lorraine. Charles, cardinal of Lorraine, was wealthy and able, and his brother Francis, duke of Guise, was a distinguished soldier who had fought in Italy and had recently won Calais from the English. Their sister Mary, widow of James V of Scotland, was serving as regent for her daughter, Mary Queen of Scots. The latter was the bride of the new king, Francis II, who succeeded his father, Henry II, in 1559. The aims of the Guises were dictated partly by their immense pride and ambition and partly by their unswerving and possibly even fanatical adherence to the Catholic faith. In their relentless hatred for Protestantism and their determination to extirpate it completely, they often went beyond the desires of more moderate Catholics.

The three families of Bourbon, Guise, and Montmorency were the greatest of the noble families in France, and the conflicts among them, especially between the Guise and Bourbon interests, combined with and intensified the religious struggle. The influence and

connections of these families extended throughout the country and helped to spread the conflict. In France, therefore, as everywhere else, the religious issue became inextricably tangled up with a complex of political and personal motivations, the struggle for power and influence, the desire to rule the state.

During the second half of the sixteenth century, the financial condition of France was precarious. The war with Spain had brought about in 1557 and 1558 a sort of speculative boom because of the high interest rate the king was prepared to pay on his short-term war loans. Like Philip II, who went bankrupt in 1557, Henry II was forced to default on his debts, and the bubble burst. All of this helps to explain why France and Spain made peace in 1559. At the death of Henry II, the French crown had debts of over forty million livres and an income of about twelve million. Much of this income never reached the crown.

Against this rather ominous background of political, personal, and religious rivalry and financial instability, the tragedy of the religious wars was about to be enacted. The so-called Conspiracy of Amboise showed the growing tension between the great factions. The young king was dominated by the Guise family, and this aroused the resentment of Cond, who became the central figure in a plot to seize the king, the duke of Guise, and the cardinal of Lorraine at Amboise in March 1560. No harm was to come to the king, but the Guise brothers were to be killed if they attempted to resist. The conspiracy failed; one result was the killing of many Huguenot prisoners. However, the conspiracy itself was not primarily a Huguenot rising. The Huguenots, for the most part, had remained obedient to the advice of Calvin, who was opposed to rebellion against the constituted authorities. The savage persecution the Guises were carrying out, however, was forcing the Huguenots to consider armed resistance in spite of Calvin's principles. Thus, when Cond planned a second rising, more of the Huguenots joined him. This plot also failed, and Cond was taken prisoner. Had it not been for the death of the young king Francis II in 1560, Cond would have been executed.

Even before the second conspiracy, the bitter hatred that was felt everywhere for the Guises had impelled the Queen Mother to assert herself and assume the controlling power in the state. This meant the adoption of a policy of religious toleration. On the death of Francis II, his younger brother, only ten years old, became king as Charles IX, and Catherine de' Medici secured the regency for herself, thus becoming the real ruler of the country. The result was that the Guise faction was deprived of its power, Cond was released, and the principal advisers to the regent were Constable Montmorency and Antoine de Navarre.

The meeting of the Estates-General at Orlans in December 1560, a few days after the death of Francis II, was the first such meeting since 1484. The chancellor, Michel de l'Hopital, in his opening speech on behalf of the government, proposed a policy of toleration. He urged that religious peace should be maintained and that the religious problem be held in abeyance until a general council of the church should meet.

Catherine de' Medici continued to adhere to a policy of toleration as a temporary expedient. She hoped eventually to bring about a compromise that would unite Catholic and Protestant in one church. To this end she called a meeting at Poissy in 1561. At this Colloquy of Poissy the chief representative of Protestantism was Beza, Calvin's chief lieutenant at Geneva and himself a Frenchman by birth. The cardinal of Lorraine was the chief Catholic spokesman. The failure of the meeting was a foregone conclusion. The differences between the two sides were of such basic importance that no compromise was possible.

In December 1561, Antoine de Bourbon went over to the Catholic side. In the following month, Catherine issued the Edict of January in another attempt to solve the religious problem. While it forbade public worship by the Huguenots within the walls of towns, it permitted such worship outside the walls and private worship within. The importance of this edict was that it gave legal recognition to the Huguenots for the first time. It also allowed meetings of their consistories and synods with the permission of the magistrates, which they were told to grant. Unfortunately, as was to be the case with similar measures in the following years, such concessions managed to exasperate the Catholics without satisfying the Huguenots.

The incident that actually began the civil wars was the so-called Massacre of Vassy, which occurred on March 1, 1562. While passing with some of his troops through Vassy, a town in the northeastern part of the country near the Marne, the duke of Guise found a group of Huguenots conducting illegal worship in a barn. There followed a conflict between the congregation and Guise's men in which more than one hundred Huguenots were wounded and several killed. The incident set off a wave of similar ones in other places with reprisals from the Huguenots, who broke into Catholic churches, destroyed images, and so forth.

Now the sides formed for civil war, with the duke of Guise and Constable Montmorency leading the Catholic forces, while Cond and Coligny were at the head of the Huguenots. Both sides tended to look to foreign countries for aid. The Huguenots looked to Elizabeth I of England, who was happy to weaken the French monarchy provided she could do it without too great cost or too serious involvement. The Catholics looked to Philip II, whose desire to defend the faith was combined with a passion for the aggrandizement of Spain. Catherine de' Medici now became the head of the Catholic party and hostile to the Huguenots.

On February 18, 1563, the duke of Guise, who was besieging Orlans, held at the time by the Protestants, was assassinated. His widow and his son, Henry, who now became duke, held Coligny responsible for the deed, though probably falsely. Their desire for revenge is part of the background of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre nine years later.

The Peace of Amboise in March 1563 brought a temporary settlement along lines that were to become, with modifications, more or less standard during the years of renewed conflict and repeated truce that followed. The distinction between liberty of conscience and liberty of worship appeared. Liberty of conscience was to be unrestricted; what this meant was that nobody was to be compelled to attend Catholic services. Freedom of worship for Huguenots was, however, severely limited. Public worship was allowed to them only in towns where it had already been held, and it could be carried on in one town in each bailliage, a traditional division. No public worship was to be permitted in Paris. The nobles, however, could worship privately wherever they were.

The French Wars of Religion lasted for over three decades, and it would be tedious and unnecessary to relate the course of these wars in detail here. Both the Catholics and Huguenots were guilty of barbarities toward one another. Neither party could win a really decisive victory, a fact which is a tribute to the tenacity of the Huguenots, who were apparently never more than a fairly small minority of the French population. It must be remembered that the Huguenots were not fighting for toleration as we would understand it; to them their cause was that of the truth, and there could only be one truth. Therefore, it was their aim to make their religion the only one officially recognized in France. Though the majority of Frenchmen might oppose them, the Lord, they confidently believed, was on their side, and they were fighting His battles.

France was being torn apart. As a consequence, there began to appear a party known as the politiques, comprised of both Catholics and Protestants, who put the interests of their country above the victory of either religious confession. They were, therefore, willing to purchase peace at the price of toleration. This outlook appealed to Catherine de' Medici, who tried to bring about reconciliation by arranging a marriage between her daughter Marguerite and Henry of Navarre, who had become the titular leader of the Huguenots by the time of the marriage in August 1572.

In the meantime, the young king, Charles IX, who became twenty in 1570, was becoming increasingly anxious to shake off his mother's domination and assert himself by some outstanding deed. He was attracted to the idea of striking a blow against Spain in the Netherlands, where revolt had started, and in this he was encouraged by Admiral Coligny, who became his chief adviser in 1571. These developments inevitably displeased Catherine. She saw her power over her son threatened, and she feared the prospect of a war with Spain. The method she adopted for getting out of this dilemma was political assassination. Coligny was the target and the perfect instrument was at hand in the Guise family, which still blamed him for the assassination of Duke Francis.

Catherine picked an extremely inopportune time to attempt the execution of her scheme. On August 18, her daughter and Henry of Navarre were married, and to celebrate the event, prominent Huguenots from all over the country were in Paris. It was in these

potentially explosive circumstances that Catherine provoked the Guises to attempt the murder of Coligny. At best, this is what appears to have happened. On August 22, somebody fired a shot at Coligny, which wounded him but did not endanger his life. There was great indignation among the Protestant leaders assembled in Paris, and King Charles IX was determined to track down the would-be murderers of his friend. The Guise family was, of course, immediately suspected.

Catherine was in a desperate dilemma. Any investigation of the crime would be likely to implicate her. To avoid this, she hit on the plan of a general slaughter of Protestants. It was easy to get the support of the Guises and of her son Henry, duke of Anjou. The king remained to be convinced, and at first was reluctant. His character was not, however, strong enough to resist the pressure to which he was subjected, and in the end he broke down and consented.

Early in the morning of St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1572, at the sound of the tocsin, the slaughter began. Coligny was killed in his bed under the personal supervision of the duke of Guise. A number of Huguenot nobles who were sleeping in the Louvre, supposedly under the king's personal protection, were murdered at the king's order. Huguenots of all classes throughout the city were killed by the ordinary people of Paris. From the capital the slaughter spread to the provinces, where it went on for several days. Estimates of the number of victims vary, although all agree that there were thousands of them. The duke of Sully, a prominent Huguenot, estimated the number at seventy thousand which at least one distinguished historian of our own time accepts. Others suggest a lower figure, such as three or four thousand in Paris and as many more in the provinces.

Throughout Europe people were horror-struck at the news. Protestants, as in England, were confirmed in their belief of an international Catholic conspiracy, and wondered if their turn would come next. Many Catholics were dismayed, but some were not. Philip II of Spain was pleased. Pope Gregory XIII had a medal struck to commemorate the happy event, and congratulated the king and Queen Mother for their signal contribution to the triumph of Christianity. As for Charles IX, it is said that he was haunted by the deed, that his sleep was disturbed by horrible visions, and that his premature death in 1574 may have been hastened by his remorse. Catherine seems not to have suffered any pangs. For diplomatic purposes, however, she had to concoct some more or less plausible explanation. Thus it was officially stated that the crown had been forced to defend itself against a Huguenot conspiracy.

Because of his connection with the royal family, Henry of Navarre was spared. He had to become a Catholic, and was actually more or less a prisoner at court. The Huguenots, though deprived of their leaders, were far from crushed. Instead, amazingly, they continued to offer a stiff resistance. With the loss of the murdered nobles, the popular element became more prominent in the movement, and the ministers assumed leadership.

The massacre marked a turning point in the development of Huguenot political theory. The political ideas of the Huguenots, which are of great importance, are discussed more fully in Chapter 21.

In 1573, Henry, the duke of Anjou, was elected king of Poland. On May 30, 1574, Charles IX died at age twenty-four, and Henry abandoned his Polish throne to become Henry III of France. He was one of the strangest of Catherine's children. He aroused a great deal of unflattering comment by his predilection for effeminate and dissipated companions, his mignons, on whom he lavished large sums that the monarchy could not afford. Much of their time was spent in revelry, in which the king took an active part, often disguised in women's clothing. These periods alternated for Henry, with spells of religious devotion and repentance, in which he would weep and scourge himself before returning to his revels. At one time he developed a great affection for poodles, on which he spent a great deal of money. With all of this, he was at the same time a man of intelligence and ability, and sometimes devoted himself to his duties. This never lasted long, however, and his neglect further weakened the crown, as his eccentric behavior helped to undermine its prestige, already dangerously dwindling. Thus in his reign, anarchy and disintegration continued.

In 1584 Henry III's one surviving brother died. Since Henry III had no children and was clearly not going to have any, this raised the question of the succession to the throne. The nearest relation was Henry of Navarre, but he was a Protestant. To prevent the accession of a heretic, the Guise family took the lead in forming a Holy League in alliance with Spain. Its purpose was to wipe out heresy in France and in the Netherlands. As a sort of stopgap, the old cardinal of Lorraine was recognized as king of France in the event of the death of Henry III. The League spread throughout the country. Its chief center was in Paris, and it was joined by most of the great towns and by most provinces in the north and center of France. In Paris a similar organization had sprung up independently, known as the Sixteen, from the leaders of the sixteen sections of the city. The king tried to persuade Henry of Navarre to become a Catholic, but for the time being he refused.

When the League raised an army, Henry III in 1585 revoked all edicts that granted toleration, prohibited public worship by Huguenots, banished their ministers, and gave Protestants the choice of becoming Catholic or leaving the country in six months. The result was a renewal of the war. Pope Gregory XIII, in the meantime, issued a bull declaring Henry of Navarre a heretic and, therefore, unable to succeed to the throne, and releasing his vassals from their allegiance.

The War of the Three Henrys Henry III, Henry of Guise, and Henry of Navarre followed. The extreme Catholic faction, headed by the Guise family, retained its distrust of the king, who was increasingly losing his grip on events. In July 1588 the king was compelled by

the Edict of Union to turn over virtually all power to Guise. When the Estates-General met at Blois in October, King Henry III found that it was dominated by the League and opposed to him. The king struck back by having Guise assassinated at Blois in December.

Many other members of the Guise party were arrested and executed, including the cardinal of Guise, the duke's brother. This increased the hostility felt toward the king by Paris and much of the country. The duke of Mayenne, the oldest surviving brother of the duke of Guise, became the head of the Paris government; and the Sorbonne declared Henry's subjects absolved from their allegiance to him.

The king now had to fall back on the support of Henry of Navarre, who assured him of his loyalty. The two concluded a truce for a year. As the League, with its foreign connections, was alienating most Frenchmen, the reconciliation of the two Henrys was widely welcomed by politiques and moderate Catholics. Together the two men and their forces marched on Paris. However, on August 1, 1589, a monk, Jacques Clément, stabbed the king. Before his death, he declared Henry of Navarre his successor. The death of Henry III saved Paris for the time being, because his forces did not remain to besiege the city, and Henry of Navarre was left with the job of fighting his way to acceptance as king of France. The key to this recognition was Paris, and the devotion of its inhabitants to the Roman church made his job a difficult one.

On August 4, 1589, Henry of Navarre issued a declaration in which he undertook to maintain Catholicism as the religion of France and make no innovations. He promised to submit to instruction by a general or national council, to deprive nobody of dignities or offices held under the late king, to appoint no Protestants to vacant offices for six months, and to grant no new privileges to the Protestants. This brought him the recognition of most of the Catholic nobles, but most of the country remained in revolt against him. Philip II became the real leader of the League, and hoped to see his daughter Isabella on the French throne. He tried to have himself declared protector of France, an ambition that was opposed even by many members of the League party. The duke of Mayenne, the nominal head of the League, hoped to become king himself, and for that reason was unfriendly to Philip's aims. Meanwhile, the League declared the cardinal of Bourbon king of France as Charles X.

In September 1589 Henry of Navarre won the battle of Arques and took most of Normandy. In October and November he tried unsuccessfully to take Paris. Meanwhile, most of the Protestant states of Europe had recognized him as king of France; in November Venice followed suit. Pope Sixtus V hoped for Henry's conversion, so that he could be used to balance the power of Philip II. Meanwhile, Henry continued his campaign to reduce the country to obedience, winning many successes. At Ivry, in March 1590, he won a great victory over Mayenne; though here, as at Arques, his forces were outnumbered.

In May Henry appeared once more before Paris and invested the city. His siege was so

close that there were said to be thirteen thousand deaths from starvation, followed afterwards by thirty thousand more from fever. There may even have been cases of cannibalism. The city was saved by Spanish intervention. From the Netherlands, Philip sent Alessandro Farnese, duke of Parma, to raise the siege and provision the city. Parma was the best general of the age, perhaps the only one who could be considered a match for Henry. He succeeded in his mission, and Henry was again thwarted. After Parma's return to the Netherlands, Philip sent so many soldiers from the Low Countries to France that Parma had to face the Dutch rebels with insufficient troops. As a result the rebels under Maurice of Nassau were able to take the offensive. Thus the affairs of the various parts of Europe reacted constantly upon one another.

Henry of Navarre, like his opponents, had the aid of foreign powers. In 1591 and 1592, with an army composed largely of English, Swiss, Germans, and later some Dutch, he undertook to besiege Rouen in Normandy. His success here would, he hoped, make him master of France and even force Paris to acknowledge him. Once again he was frustrated by Parma, who raised the siege and returned to the Netherlands, after suffering heavy losses. The great general died in December 1592.

Meanwhile, Henry of Navarre announced that he had determined to receive instruction in the Catholic faith. To gain his kingdom, he was willing to abjure the Protestant faith and become a Catholic. He did not come to this decision lightheartedly, whether or not he ever said, as is commonly supposed, "Paris is worth a Mass." No doubt he would have preferred to remain a Protestant and still be king, if this had been possible. But it was not. The Huguenots were still a small minority of the French population probably less than one-tenth and a very unpopular one. Henry was essentially a politique, putting the welfare of France above confessional considerations.

On July 25, 1593, at the church of St. Denis, Henry was received into the Roman communion by the archbishop of Bourges. Although the pope Clement VIII did not yet recognize him, his conversion did help him in winning the allegiance of his people. Many towns now submitted to him, a step no doubt made easier by the generous terms the king granted. These included a complete amnesty for past resistance to him, confirmation of the privileges of the towns, a promise to neither build citadels nor to destroy those already in existence, exemption from extraordinary taxation, and large gifts of money to their governors. In February 1594, Henry of Navarre was crowned Henry IV at Chartres, and in March entered Paris. He was now, in fact, the king of France.

His difficulties were not completely ended. In 1594 an attempt was made on the king's life by the pupil of a Jesuit. There were also a few holdouts against Henry's accession among the more intransigent Leaguers, and he proceeded to reduce them to obedience. He had a remarkable lack of vindictiveness, and once they submitted he made no attempt to punish them. Since their resistance was encouraged by Philip II, Henry decided to strike at the one source of his troubles by declaring war on Spain in 1595.

In the same year negotiations with the pope, Clement VIII, for Henry's absolution came to a successful conclusion. In return for his reception into the church, Henry agreed to introduce the decrees of the Council of Trent into France as far as was consistent with public tranquillity. This meant, in effect, that the doctrinal decrees were accepted but the disciplinary ones were not; the king remained firmly in control of the Gallican church. His new relationship with Clement VIII enabled him to secure an annulment of his marriage to Marguerite of Valois, from whom he had long been separated and who had borne him no children. In 1600 he was married to Marie de' Medici.

In 1596 he secured an alliance with England and the Dutch against the common enemy, Spain. The exhaustion of both the French and the Spanish led to the Peace of Vervins of 1598, restoring the status quo as established by the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrsis of 1559. The English and the Dutch continued the fight, calling Henry's conduct treachery.

Henry IV was now able to devote himself to the solution of the two great problems of his distracted country: economic settlement and religious peace. To this task he brought qualities of character and personality that made him the most popular of all French kings and one of the founders of the modern greatness of France. Perhaps his most appealing qualities were his courage and his friendliness. Henry was a soldier; most of his life had been lived in the saddle. His men could always count on finding his white plume in the forefront of the battle. He was never aloof but easy of access and genuinely interested in the welfare of his subjects. He enjoyed mingling with ordinary people in taverns and in their homes, and could talk to them easily and without embarrassment. He was not the sort of king who spent long hours at his desk; he was physically active and restless and liked to move about. Much of his public business was done as he paced back and forth discussing affairs of state with his advisers. He was not much of a reader, but he had a quick and penetrating intelligence. He understood things readily and made his decisions quickly and with sound judgment. He bore no grudges and was without bitterness over past injuries, but at the same time he was quick to forget past favors and thus not always grateful. He was capable of lying and deceit, and could break his promises if he thought it necessary.

He was irresponsible, to put it mildly, in his relations with women. He did not love either of his wives, and sought solace in other relationships. He had his illegitimate children reared along with his children by Marie de' Medici.

In his attitude toward government, Henry IV was authoritarian. He said, "I wish to be obeyed." He believed that the king was responsible only to God and to his own conscience. However, he preferred to persuade, if possible, rather than command. His methods of governing were informal and personal; he had a small group of advisers whom he consulted irregularly. During his reign it was not easy for new men to get established at court, because Henry preferred the advice of his old fighting companions. There was a

large royal council, which functioned chiefly in the realm of justice; and there were four secretaries, one of whom had to countersign each act of the king.

Though Henry was authoritarian in tendency, it is too early to speak of centralization in French government and administration. Even under normal conditions of peace and order, the local communities towns and parishes of France were largely self-governing. The chief support of the royal power throughout the country came from the judges who administered the king's justice. These judges, however, were local people who bought and inherited their positions, and they could not be counted on to put the interests of the king above their own. During the civil wars, the breakdown of the monarchy and the royal administration had given to local officials almost complete independence of the crown. The nobles had become accustomed to the independence they had acquired during the wars, and there had grown up a system of clientage, with lesser nobles attaching themselves to great lords a sort of feudal revival.

The economic and financial condition of France was appalling. Here too, as in the case of government and administration, the abuses that prevailed even under the best conditions had been compounded by the effects of the wars. We have already noted that the system of privileged classes, and of farming the taxes, together with inadequate accounting procedures, deprived the crown of a great deal of its rightful revenue. During the wars, taxes had become harmful as the country lost its capacity to pay them. In some areas, this contributed to a complete breakdown of commerce and industry. Communications had also broken down on roads and rivers. Then there were cases of famine within a town while not far off crops were rotting in the fields. Some lands, devastated by troops and by brigands and oppressed by the excessive size of the *taille*, were going out of cultivation. The royal treasury was empty and the debt was huge.

Henry IV was personally very much interested in the economic reconstruction of the country. For his chief adviser in this field he chose an old friend, the duke of Sully. Sully did not attempt a thorough reorganization of the finances of the country; the system was too solidly entrenched for that, and the need for immediate revenue too pressing. He strove with great success, however, to improve the accounting system, to levy taxes in a fair and economical manner, to check the abuses of the tax-farmers, and, thereby, to build up the treasury. Many useless offices were abolished. He was so successful that the government was able to meet its expenses, pay off the debt, and build a surplus in the treasury. He put the roads into excellent condition, cleaned the rivers, drained swamps, and began a system of canals to unite the Mediterranean, the Bay of Biscay, the English Channel, and the North Sea. Sully believed in concentrating on the revival of agriculture. All arrears of the *taille* prior to 1597 were forgiven, and the amount payable each year was reduced. He abolished export duties on grain and wine, thus opening foreign markets to French farmers. He believed that France should buy manufactured goods from abroad. The king, however, was more interested in building up French industry and trade, and encouraged the making of silk, cloth of gold, and the Gobelin tapestries, which became

famous. Soon France had a flourishing export trade. All of these measures were taken under strict governmental supervision and regulation.

The problem of the Huguenots was equally pressing. Henry IV, so recently a Huguenot himself, had promised the continuation of Protestant worship where it was already being carried on, and had declared that Protestants were eligible to hold all public offices all this until there should be a general settlement. However, the Huguenots were disturbed by the provisional nature of these privileges, by the king's renunciation of the faith, and by the hostility displayed by the parlements. They began to strengthen their organization and to become, more even than before, a state within the state.

Their relations with Henry IV became so strained that he had reason to fear the resumption of civil war. As his position in France grew stronger, however, the Huguenots grew more ready to negotiate with him. Thus both parties were ready for an agreement, and this took the form of the Edict of Nantes of 1598. This famous edict granted complete liberty of conscience and of private worship throughout France. Public worship was permitted wherever it had been carried on in 1596 and 1597, in two towns in each of the traditional divisions of France (bailliage and sncousse), in a couple of hundred other towns, and in several thousand noble castles. Worship in Paris could be carried on only privately by nobles at court, and there was to be no public Protestant worship within five leagues (fifteen miles) of the city. Huguenots were granted full civil rights and the protection of the laws, access to all public careers, and admission to all schools, universities, and hospitals. The parlements were to have special chambers to try cases involving Protestants, in which there were to be Protestant judges. There was to be one Protestant judge in the Parlement of Paris, but in the other parlements, the chambers would be composed of an equal number of Catholic and Protestant judges. By a provision not technically a part of the edict, the king granted the Huguenots about seventy towns of their own, some of which were to be garrisoned by troops paid by the king, who also paid the governors of these strongholds. This grant was made for eight years and renewed several times.

Thus the Huguenots had solidified their position as a state within the state. Henry IV allowed them to keep their provincial and general assemblies and to maintain two representatives at court to present their grievances. Until his assassination in 1610, he watched over the interests of the Huguenots and permitted the establishment of a Huguenot church closer to Paris than five leagues.

It should be added that the Protestants never did enjoy all the privileges accorded them theoretically by the edict. Their garrisons were not paid regularly by the king, their rights of worship were not in practice granted in all the places to which they were legally entitled, and ways were found to counteract the influence of Protestant judges in the courts. After the death of Henry IV, their position deteriorated steadily until Louis XIV revoked the edict in 1685.

Nevertheless, the Edict of Nantes was a landmark in the history of religion, because it recognized in principle the possibility of two religious confessions living under one government as loyal subjects. Indeed, the Huguenots were to prove among the most loyal and useful subjects of the kings of France.



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CHAPTER 18

SPAIN FROM FERDINAND AND ISABELLA TO PHILIP

THE REVOLT OF THE NETHERLANDS

The rise of Spain in the sixteenth century to the position of the predominant power in Europe is in many ways an amazing phenomenon. It was a poor, barren country only about half its soil was fertile and it was not even unified at the start of the period, but consisted of separate kingdoms with their own distinctive histories and traditions. Yet it acquired a vast overseas empire and exerted its influence throughout Europe. This commanding position did not last long, however, and the decline of Spain is as spectacular as its rise. This chapter deals with its rise and the beginning of its decline.

Spain was characterized by pronounced regional variations. These were accentuated by the reconquest, the series of campaigns in the Middle Ages by which the Christian kingdoms of the peninsula subdued the Moslems. The different kingdoms accomplished their purpose at different rates of speed and with different effects. When Castile, the largest and most powerful, conquered Andalusia, the crown gave great blocks of land to the nobles; this helped to make the Castilian nobility exceptionally powerful. Since the nobles, as the military class, were the leaders in the reconquest, and since the process took longer in Castile than elsewhere, their ideals and outlook came to permeate Castilian life. The war against the infidel also helped to give the church a commanding position and to develop a crusading spirit among the people.

The great stretches of land acquired by Castile were too barren for agriculture but well suited for sheep grazing. This fact, together with the introduction of the merino sheep from North Africa about 1300, helped to make sheep raising the chief Castilian economic activity.

On the eastern coast of the peninsula was the crown of Aragon, consisting of Catalonia, Aragon, and Valencia. This area was deeply involved in maritime activity, especially Catalonia with its great harbor of Barcelona. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Catalonia acquired an overseas commercial empire, including Sardinia and Sicily, and

Catalan merchants operated throughout the Mediterranean and beyond. Towns flourished, and the powerful merchant class that lived in them dominated the country.

Late in the fifteenth century, grave crises in Catalonia resulted in a weakening of the crown of Aragon at the time of the union with Castile. The Black Death and its reappearances led to a shortage of labor and bitter conflicts between peasants and landowners. The financial and commercial position of Catalonia suffered from these factors and from Genoese competition and class conflict in the towns. The climax was civil war from 1462 to 1472, followed by an uneasy peace. Louis XI of France was able to fish in these troubled waters and annex Cerdagne and Roussillon (to use their French names).

In Castile also there had been troubles in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, due to the excessive power of the nobles, disputed successions, and civil war. Yet Castile was the dominant force in the unification of Spain, with a territory three times as large as that of Aragon, and a population in 1500 of six or seven million to one million Aragonese. The union had its origin in the marriage on October 19, 1469, of Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Aragon, with Isabella, heiress to Castile. A disputed succession was to cost Isabella ten years of fighting before her position was secured. Since the bride and groom were related, they needed a papal dispensation to get married. Such a document was duly produced, but it was actually a forgery, concocted by Ferdinand himself; his father, the king of Aragon; and the archbishop of Toledo. Castile and Aragon remained distinct, and the union was at first a personal one only; it was not certain that it would survive Ferdinand and Isabella.

Ferdinand became king of Aragon at the death of his father in 1479, the same year Isabella succeeded in finally securing the throne of Castile. It was their task to restore order and to strengthen royal authority. Early in their reign they set out to conquer Granada, the last independent Moorish kingdom; they finally succeeded in 1492, thus completing the reconquest. The terms given to the conquered Moslems were liberal: They were to be left in possession of their property and in the enjoyment of their own laws, customs, and, most interesting of all, their religion. These terms were observed, however, only for a few years. Then the archbishop of Toledo, Cardinal Ximnez, instituted a policy of forcible conversion, which led to an uprising in 1499. In 1502, by order of Isabella, all Moors in Granada were given the choice of receiving Christian baptism or leaving Spain. Since measures were taken to block their departure, they were compelled to remain and become Christians, at least in name. These converted Moors were called Moriscos.

Ferdinand and Isabella are regarded as the creators of modern Spain, but they did not create it out of nothing. They worked on traditional lines, building on existing institutions and restoring them to working order, and modifying and adapting them to meet new needs. This process is illustrated in Ferdinand's government of Aragon where he made use of two already existing institutions, the viceroy and the council. Henceforth, there was a viceroy for each of the three parts of the crown of Aragon, and the old council of the kings

of Aragon the curia regis became the Council of Aragon. Since it followed the king, the council spent most of its time in Castile. As new possessions were added to the Spanish monarchy, this system was extended; and Spain and its empire came to be governed by means of a series of councils in Castile and viceroys elsewhere.

In Castile, Isabella allowed her husband a good deal of authority, so that essentially they ruled jointly there. The first necessity was to suppress the power of the aristocracy, which had long meant misrule. The monarchs had the towns as allies in this endeavor, and the chief instrument the towns placed at their disposal was the institution of the Holy Brotherhood. The Brotherhood had its own troops to arrest criminals and its own courts to try them. By 1498 order was so far restored in Castile that the Brotherhood was abolished, though local brotherhoods continued to exist.

The crown also strengthened itself and weakened the nobles by acquiring control of the three great military religious orders: Santiago, Calatrava, and Alc ntara. These possessed enormous resources, which had previously been at the disposal of a small number of great nobles. Ferdinand and Isabella successfully asserted their authority over them, and this was confirmed by a papal bull in 1523 during the reign of their grandson, Charles.

Another means of weakening the great nobility was the employment of men of humbler origins in responsible posts. The royal Council of Castile, which had been dominated by the great nobles, was reconstituted so that its membership consisted of a prelate, three lesser nobles, and eight or nine jurists. The great nobles were permitted to attend meetings, but they had no vote. Similarly, the crown was careful to withhold military, diplomatic, and administrative appointments from them.

While Ferdinand and Isabella did weaken the political position of the nobility, this fact must be placed in proper perspective by the consideration of two related facts: They did not strengthen the townsmen politically, and they did not seriously weaken the great nobles socially or economically. Their treatment of the townspeople can be seen in the history of the Cortes of Castile in their reign. This body, the representative assembly of Castile, came to consist entirely of thirty-six townsmen, two from each of eighteen towns. The other two estates, the nobles and clergy, were normally not summoned after 1480; the towns, thus isolated, had little power to resist the demands of the monarchs. Ferdinand and Isabella did not even bother to call them unless they needed money. Since revenues were rising, there were long periods when the Cortes did not meet at all; they were not called between 1483 and 1497.

Ferdinand and Isabella strengthened their grip on the towns at the expense of the democratic traditions that had long prevailed there. Here again their chief instrument was an already existing institution, the officer known as the corregidor. Ferdinand and Isabella appointed one in each of the chief towns of Castile, and gave these corregidores broad

administrative and judicial powers. Henceforth, royal authority was great in the towns, and only a little remained of the popular tradition.

The monarchs had a deep sense of their obligation to give justice to their people. Therefore, they reorganized the whole Castilian judicial system, and on Fridays made themselves publicly available to all who wished to appear before them to receive justice.

Thus Ferdinand and Isabella intervened creatively in many spheres of Spanish life. But there is a debit side to their achievements. Security was purchased at the expense of liberty. An increase of taxes took place, which together with their unequal incidence among different classes, was to have bad effects in the long run. The increase in governmental activity brought the growth of a bureaucracy with the abuses inherent in such bodies. Most serious of all was the failure to curb the economic and social privileges of the aristocracy. The nobles kept their traditional rights of feudal jurisdiction, they were exempt from taxes, and they had vast land holdings. Together with the high churchmen and the upper class in the cities, they comprised less than 2 percent of the population, yet these groups possessed about 95 to 97 percent of the land of Castile. Over half of this land belonged to a small number of immensely wealthy families. When Granada was conquered, most of it was granted to the nobles.

In their social and economic policies, the monarchs sacrificed long-term advantages to the needs of the moment. This is most clearly seen in the subordination of agriculture to the demands of the sheep growers. The latter had been united by the crown into an organization called the mesta, which received special privileges in return for its great contributions to the treasury. Ferdinand and Isabella reserved large areas for sheep grazing, thus removing them from agricultural production. Agriculture was already in a poor condition because of the poverty of the peasants, the lack of interest on the part of noble landowners, and the prevalence of primitive and wasteful methods of cultivation. All of this, together with a growing population and crop failures in the early sixteenth century, brought about the importation of grain and government price fixing. Both of these expedients were to be resorted to throughout the century.

Agriculture suffered also from the contempt of Castilians for this kind of work, a contempt traceable primarily to two factors. The aristocratic sense of values that permeated society exalted the occupation of warfare and brought all kinds of manual work into disrepute. The fact that agriculture was largely in the hands of the Moriscos contributed to the low standing it had in the eyes of the so-called Old Christians those without Moorish or Jewish blood. The harsh treatment of the Moriscos was harmful to agriculture, just as the harsh treatment of the converted Jews (conversos or Marranos) damaged trade. It was at this point that religion and the church impinged on the economic, social, and cultural life of Spain.

The Spanish church was rich and powerful. The archbishop of Toledo, chief prelate of Spain, was the richest man in the country after the king, and the richest ecclesiastic in the entire church after the pope. In the fifteenth century, with the weakening of royal power, the Spanish church had acquired a considerable degree of independence. If the monarchs were to control Spain, they needed to control the church. Here the chief issue was the right of presentation to benefices, that is the right to grant church positions; the chief antagonist was the papacy, which also claimed the right of presentation. Ferdinand and Isabella gained an important advantage when they secured from Innocent VIII in 1486 the right of presentation to all major benefices in the kingdom of Granada. This enabled them later to secure a similar right in the overseas empire. In 1523 their grandson, Charles V, received from Pope Adrian VI, his old tutor and adviser, the right to present to all bishoprics in Spain. Thus the monarchs managed to gain control over the church, which became one of their chief sources of income.

The church in Spain as elsewhere was in urgent need of reform at the start of the sixteenth century. The monarchs, especially the queen, were aware of this and undertook to improve conditions, with the help of Ximnez de Cisneros. This remarkable man, a Franciscan friar, became Isabella's confessor in 1492, and later was made archbishop of Toledo, cardinal, and Inquisitor General. Austere and zealous, he was an implacable enemy of church abuses, as he was of heresy.

The result was an improvement in the quality of the clergy. Monasteries were reformed, often against the will of the inmates; the Dominicans of Salamanca took up arms in their own defense. Four hundred Franciscan friars in Andalusia, faced with the prospect of celibacy, migrated to North Africa and became Moslems. Similarly, the secular clergy were reformed, bishops came to be chosen more for their learning and piety and less for family background, and schools were founded to provide a better educated clergy.

One of Ximnez's greatest contributions to the reform movement was the foundation in 1508 of the University of Alcal to further theological studies. Here he sponsored the great edition of the Bible known as the Complutensian Polyglot, which gave in parallel columns the text in the original languages and the Latin Vulgate as well. The New Testament was printed in 1514, before that of Erasmus, though it was not actually published until 1522. As a critical text it far excelled the one established by Erasmus. The Alcal version of the Hebrew Old Testament remained standard for centuries. Here the methods of humanism were put in the service of ecclesiastical and religious reform.

It was in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella that the Spanish Inquisition came into existence. It was established throughout Spain by a bull of Sixtus IV in 1478, at the request of the monarchs, and began operations in 1480. The Inquisition had previously existed in Aragon but had become inactive; it had not existed in Castile. It was an ecclesiastical tribunal for the discovery and suppression of heresy. In the Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella, the chief threat of heresy was thought to proceed from the Jews

and conversos. The Spanish Inquisition was in fact the outcome and weapon of racial prejudice, and its most profound motivation was the national passion for "purity of blood."

The Iberian peninsula was unique in medieval Europe in harboring a mixed population of Christians, Moslems, and Jews; the Spanish had been more tolerant of Jews than many other Christian nations. Though there was endemic anti-Semitism, Jews entered trades and professions and mingled freely with Gentiles. The Fourth Lateran Council, called by Pope Innocent III in 1215, urged the enactment of laws against Jews. From the thirteenth century onward such anti-Semitic legislation became common in Spain, though the Jews were powerful enough to prevent it from being rigorously enforced. In learning, the professions, government and administration, and finance, they had risen to positions of great importance. During the reconquest, they were indispensable; further, any systematic persecution would have been likely to drive them into the tolerant Moorish states.

With the progress of the reconquest, the latent hatred of the Jews rose more readily to the surface. The climax came in 1391, when massacres of Jews took place throughout Spain on an unprecedented scale. In Seville alone four thousand were killed, and the total number of victims may have reached fifty thousand. Many Jews, to save their lives, became Christians. With further massacres and anti-Semitic laws, the process of conversion was hastened. The New Christians another term for the conversos escaped from the disabilities imposed on Jews, and thus were again able to rise to leading positions. In both church and state, high offices came to be held by men who had Jewish blood; in intellectual life and literature they played a distinguished part. A large number married into the aristocracy, to the point where many, perhaps most, of the noble families of Spain had received some admixture of Jewish blood. Because of the intense feeling of the Spanish about "purity of blood," the prestige and privileges of the nobility were threatened. The Inquisition arose partly from the desire of the nobles to preserve their position by stamping out the threat of racial contamination.

The New Christians were suspected of being insincere in their Christianity and secretly adhering to their old beliefs and practices, and in some cases this was true. Others were truly devoted to the Christian faith. The first two Inquisitors General, including the famous Torquemada, had Jewish blood, as did Ferdinand himself.

The policy of Ferdinand and Isabella was consistently anti-Semitic, and its climax came in 1492 after the fall of Granada. They then decreed that all Jews in Spain must either be baptized or leave the country. Estimates as to the numbers involved vary greatly. Anywhere from 165,000 to 400,000 may have left; perhaps 50,000 remained and became converted. Thus there were officially no Jews in Spain after 1492, but popular hatred and bigotry made no distinction between Jews and converts.

The establishment of the Inquisition came about as an attempt to deal with the problem of

the conversos who were secretly adhering to Judaism. The Inquisition had no authority to deal with unconverted Jews, who were still numerous when it began its operations in 1480. Its affairs were managed by the Council of the Inquisition, of which the president came to be known as the Inquisitor General. Tomás de Torquemada, a Dominican, was the first Inquisitor General. The Inquisition was established in all the Spanish kingdoms, and became the only institution whose jurisdiction ran throughout all the territories of the Spanish crown. It was controlled by the monarchy, which appointed and dismissed the Inquisitors, and this no doubt helps to explain the consistent support it enjoyed from the rulers of Spain. Attempts by the pope to assert some authority over it were successfully ward off, and complaints of injustice in its procedure were ignored.

The Inquisition administered a wide range of punishments from reprimands to burning. The death penalty was called "relaxation," because the victim was "relaxed" to the secular arm, or the state, which carried out the sentence in accordance with the doctrine that the church itself did not shed blood. Many persons fled abroad to avoid the Inquisition, so that the number who were burned in the flesh was much smaller than those who were out of reach and had to be burned in effigy. The exact number of persons punished by the Spanish Inquisition cannot be precisely known. A chronicler who was secretary to Ferdinand and Isabella estimated that by 1490 two thousand persons had been burned. Another contemporary claimed that in Seville, between 1480 and 1488, over seven hundred had been burned. At Toledo, between 1485 and 1501, the number was 250 with twice that number being burned in effigy. This level of activity was not constant; there were great waves of punishment, followed by periods that were more quiet.

The effects of the Inquisition cannot be gauged merely by estimating the number of persons put to death by it. For one thing, the number of persons who received lesser punishments far exceeded the number of those executed. Furthermore, "reconciliation," in which the penitent was received back into the church, was always accompanied by one of the punishments such as confiscation or imprisonment. Other punishments included scourging, assignment to galleys, and exile to another locality.

The Moriscos also came under the Inquisition's jurisdiction. The Moslems of Aragon were not affected by the decree of 1502, but their turn came in the reign of Charles V. In 1525 he ordered the expulsion of all Moors from the territories of Aragon by the end of January 1526. The resultant wave of conversions vastly increased the number of Moriscos. They differed from the conversos in that they were never assimilated into Spanish society. They remained a subject population of agricultural laborers, frequently unable to speak Spanish. In 1526, Charles and the Inquisitor General promised that the Moriscos would be free from persecution for forty years. This promise was ignored, and the Inquisition soon began prosecuting those suspected of reverting to the Moslem faith or customs. Through bribery, the Moriscos secured some mitigation in the severity of their treatment; but in 1567 in the reign of Philip II, the government decreed that the Moriscos of Granada must give up their traditional language, clothing, customs, and books. This brought a serious

uprising in the following year, which took two years to subdue. To prevent a recurrence, all Moriscos were deported from Granada and scattered to various parts of Castile.

The suspected collusion of the Moriscos with Moslems abroad added to the urgency of the problem. Some fled Spain and joined the Turks. Others were believed to be cooperating with the Moslem raiders who periodically descended upon the coasts of Spain, so that Moriscos were eventually forbidden to live near the coasts. Another source of concern was the rapid growth of the Moriscos, increasing far more rapidly than the Old Christians. Though there were advocates of a liberal and humane policy toward the Moriscos, it was the policy advocated by the Inquisition that was eventually adopted. This policy was based on the conclusion that the Moriscos could not be assimilated into Spanish life.

In the reign of Philip III, therefore, the decision was taken to expel them from Spain. The order was given in 1609, and the actual expulsion lasted until 1614. Out of 300,000 Moriscos, about 275,000 were expelled. The economic consequences, especially in Valencia, were disastrous. Cardinal Richelieu referred to the expulsion as the most barbarous act in human history.

The Protestant Reformation gave the Inquisition something else to do. The Spanish looked on Protestantism with horror, and their horror was fed by ignorance. It was widely believed even by Philip II that the leaders of the new heresy were all descendants of Jews. The actual threat of Protestantism in Spain was never very great, but the fear of it was intense. Even before the start of Luther's revolt, there was present in Spain a movement called Illuminism. The Illuminists, or Alumbrados, were mystics who sought direct contact with God and criticized what they regarded as excessive formalism in the church. The appearance of Luther stimulated official action against the Illuminists, who were suspected of having close connections with Lutheranism. Among those arrested was Ignatius Loyola, questioned on two occasions by the Inquisition during these years. By the end of the 1520s, Illuminism had been disposed of.

Before the reign of Philip II, the Inquisition had found very few suspected Lutherans. In the late 1550s, however, circles of Protestants, small but containing important ecclesiastics, were uncovered in Seville and Valladolid. Between 1559 and 1562, in these two cities, seventy-six persons were burned at the stake as Protestants, one group in the presence of the king. Thereafter few native Spaniards were prosecuted as Protestants; burning generally involved foreigners.

The procedures of the Inquisition put the accused at a great disadvantage. Denunciations were encouraged, and were always taken seriously. People might be accused by friends, neighbors, and even relatives. In 1581, two men voluntarily denounced themselves for having said to their wives that fornication was not sinful. Apparently they accused themselves in order to forestall denunciation by their wives.

Names of accusers and witnesses were concealed from the accused. This encouraged irresponsible accusations and rendered very difficult the preparation of an adequate defense. The accused, not knowing who had accused him, was likely to be ignorant of the event or conversation on which the charges were based. Even without conviction, the accusation itself could do great harm. When a prominent physician died in 1622, secret witnesses claimed that he had been buried according to Jewish rites, and his whole family and household were imprisoned for ten years before being released for lack of evidence. Accusation always brought seizure of property, and as long as an individual was in prison, he had to pay for his upkeep and that of his dependents out of confiscated property. Since imprisonment and trial might drag on for years, the prisoner and his family might suffer great losses and even ruin. Bartolom de Carranza, archbishop of Toledo, was imprisoned on a charge of heresy in 1559, and remained in prison until 1576, when his case was finally adjudged by the pope, who found him not guilty of heresy though he condemned "errors" in Carranza's work. A few days later, Carranza died.

The Inquisition was no more inhumane than secular courts, and in some ways represented an improvement over them. Its prisons were considered cleaner and healthier than secular prisons, and, while it employed torture, it tried to avoid cruelty. Some of the secular courts were deliberately and unnecessarily cruel. Furthermore, it may also be pointed out that the number of those actually burned at the stake was a very small proportion of those who were tried.

Undoubtedly, the Inquisition had harmful effects, one of which was an atmosphere of fear and suspicion. People were afraid to speak freely, knowing that there were secret informers who had been planted among them. The Inquisition contributed a great deal to making Spain a closed society, sealed off from the outside world and afraid of all new ideas. In the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella and in the early sixteenth century, Spain was still open to the rest of the world and receptive to new ideas and experiences. Several universities were founded, and printing was introduced into the country. Before 1500 there were presses in twenty-five Spanish towns, and a law of 1480 permitted the importation of books duty-free. The influence of Erasmus in Spain was enormous; nowhere else, in fact, was his work so much admired in the first three decades of the sixteenth century.

All this was quickly changed by the fear of Illuminism and Protestantism. With the condemnation of Lutheranism, the Illuminists turned more and more to reading the works of Erasmus, especially the *Enchiridion*. There had always been a group of Spanish conservatives opposed to the ideas of Erasmus, and by 1529 they began to get the upper hand. Through unremitting persecution of men suspected of Erasmianism including some of the most distinguished thinkers in the country the works and even the name of Erasmus were wiped out in Spain by the end of the century.

These policies continued without change in the reign of Philip II; they were, if anything, intensified. In 1559, he ordered all Spaniards teaching or studying abroad to return home, except those at certain schools in Bologna, Rome, Naples, and Coimbra. The prosecution of leading intellectuals continued, and though only a few were directly involved, their example was enough to frighten a great many others into silence.

Censorship was a constant concern of the Inquisition and of the government as well. Ferdinand and Isabella retreated from their liberal policy, and in 1502 issued a regulation requiring a license for every book printed in Spain or introduced from abroad. Philip II imposed very serious restrictions on the publication and importation of books. The Inquisition meanwhile exercised its own censorship, chiefly by issuing lists or indexes of dangerous books; earlier in the century, lists from abroad had been adopted. The lists of the Inquisition contained, at one time or another, a part or all of the writings of some very distinguished people: at least two saints (Francis Borgia and Thomas More, whose *Utopia* had to be expurgated before it could be read), Erasmus, Boccaccio, Rabelais, Savonarola, Abelard, Dante (*De monarchia*), Ovid, Castiglione, Petrarch, Bodin, and Ariosto. Interestingly enough, scientific works by heretics, for example Kepler, were permitted. His works simply carried a statement that the author was condemned; thus designated, they could circulate freely.

The Inquisition exercised supervision over public and private libraries and burned many thousands of volumes. Prohibited books, however, continued to find their way into the country, although this kind of smuggling was a capital offense. All in all, Spanish intellectual life was stifled in many fields. On the other hand, the greatest age of Spanish literature and art the age of Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Velázquez, El Greco coincides with an age of great power and activity of the Inquisition. In one respect the Inquisition was very enlightened; it refused to succumb to the general witchcraft hysteria. Yet it can hardly be denied that the Inquisition was on the whole a curse whose effects have not yet been exorcised from Spanish life.

Isabella died in 1504, Ferdinand in 1516. Through a series of historical accidents premature deaths and the madness of Joanna, oldest surviving daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella the Spanish crown came on the death of Ferdinand into the hands of Joanna's son Charles. His father had been the archduke Philip, son of Emperor Maximilian I, and, therefore, a Hapsburg. Thus the policy of Ferdinand and Isabella of marrying their children into the great royal families of Europe had accomplished what they would have wished to avoid: a foreign dynasty now held the Spanish throne. Since there was no surviving heir to the second marriage of Ferdinand (to a French princess), Charles inherited both Castile and Aragon and preserved the newly acquired unity of Spain. In addition to Aragon and Castile, Charles inherited, as king of Spain, Naples and Sicily and the great Spanish claims in the New World. As a Hapsburg he also inherited the Low Countries and the Austrian lands of the family.

When he became Charles I of Spain in 1516, he was still an adolescent. He had been born in Ghent on February 24, 1500. Both physically and mentally he showed the signs of his Hapsburg ancestry. His lower jaw protruded so far that it interfered with his speech. He looked stupid, spoke little, and thought slowly. In time he would acquire experience and wisdom, but in 1516 he had neither. Worst of all in Spanish eyes, he was a foreigner surrounded by foreigners. His entourage consisted of rapacious Flemings who were eager for lucrative offices and privileges in Spain, and Charles was complaisant. Even the archbishopric of Toledo was given to the young nephew of Charles's chief adviser. Furthermore, Charles knew no Spanish. He did not arrive in Spain until September 1517, more than a year and a half after the death of Ferdinand. The dissatisfaction aroused among the Spanish by all these circumstances was intensified by his election as Holy Roman Emperor.

In May 1520, he left for Germany. Shortly before his departure, there began the Comuneros revolt in Old Castile, the northern part of Castile. At first the revolt enlisted support from virtually all classes. Led by Toledo, several cities expelled royal officials. Charles's regent, Adrian of Utrecht, his former tutor and a Fleming, was for a while made a prisoner. After a period of success, the rebels were weakened by a split between nobles and commoners, and Charles was able to win over the nobles to his side. At the battle of Villalar on April 23, 1521, the royal army won a victory, which ended the revolt.

At about the same time, there took place in Aragon a completely independent rising, the Germanía. This was a conflict between the nobles and the common people; the underlying cause was the protection by the nobles of their Moorish laborers, which infuriated the commoners. The Germanía, or brotherhood, was an organization of the populace, which seized control of the city of Valencia and spread throughout the kingdom of Valencia; the other parts of the crown of Aragon were not affected. For a while the rebels were successful against royal troops, and they proceeded against the Moorish agricultural workers. They killed some and baptized others, thereby making them free and releasing them from their Christian overlords. Thus they struck a blow at the noble landowners and subjected the laborers now Moriscos to the Inquisition. By the end of 1522 the movement had been suppressed.

The results of these two revolts and their suppression were far-reaching. As has been shown, the enforced conversion of the Moors of the crown of Aragon was decreed in 1525. To do this, Charles had to violate an oath sworn in 1518 not to extend in Aragon the forced conversion of the Moors decreed in 1502 in Castile. In 1524 he secured from the pope release from the oath. In Castile, the failure of the revolt strengthened the monarchy and helped to establish royal absolutism. The Cortes of Castile became, henceforth, merely a tax-granting body. Throughout the rest of his reign, Charles asked large sums of money from Castile, and the Cortes invariably complied. Since the nobles of Castile were exempt from taxation, it was the commoners that paid. This was the money that largely sustained Charles's vast empire. Castile was, in effect, bled for the sake of interests and

enterprises that were not related to Spain and of no benefit to the Spanish. During his reign of nearly forty years as king of Spain, Charles spent not quite sixteen in the country.

Yet there were compensations to the Spanish for their association with Charles's empire. He learned the Spanish language and came to love Spain more than any of his other territories. He employed Spaniards in posts throughout his domains. With the opening of great territories in the New World to Spanish dominion, the idea of empire became congenial to the Spaniards, particularly to the Castilians.

In the administration of Charles's domains, their sheer extent required an increasingly bureaucratic form of government. Charles was a great writer of letters, notes, and memoranda; there still exist tens of thousands of letters with his signature, and many of these letters are in his own hand. In his reign the Spanish administration took on the form it kept during the century. It was based on a series of councils some old, some new, some reorganized. These councils were of two kinds. One kind (for example, the Council of Finance) handled a particular branch of administration for the whole of the empire; the other kind (for example, the Council of Castile) dealt with the affairs of a specific territory. The Council of Castile was the chief governmental body. The Council of the Indies, founded in 1524, reflected the increasing amount of government business relating to the overseas possessions.

At the head of the government in each of the territories of the Spanish crown except Castile was the viceroy. These men had great powers, but at the same time were responsible to the particular councils that had the oversight of their territories. This combination of centralized supervision with local discretion proved effective in solving a very challenging problem: administering a worldwide empire in a period of slow communications. Under Charles and even more under his son, the system manifested also some serious weaknesses. Every matter of importance was discussed thoroughly by at least one council and perhaps by others, and every decision was made personally by the king. The decision-making process was, therefore, a very lengthy one, made even more so by the temperament of Charles himself, who was very slow and cautious. When the enormous number of his problems is taken into account, it can be readily seen that the whole system was subject to paralysis.

In these conditions, the office of royal secretary came to be a vital one, since the secretary acted as intermediary between the king and the councils. Francisco de los Cobos, who was secretary to Charles from 1516 until Cobos's death in 1547, had so much influence in administration and trained so many men to staff the bureaucracy, that he is regarded as one of the makers of the Castilian monarchy.

The period following the Comuneros uprising saw great prosperity in Castile. The colonies in the New World had in their early years a vast need for goods of all kinds from

the mother country. The Spanish silk and woolen industries flourished: demand so far outran supply that orders remained unfilled for years. Iron and steel production prospered in the Basque provinces. Trade and colonization in the New World were reserved for Castilians, and the city of Seville enjoyed a virtual monopoly of the American trade. Into Seville poured the gold and silver of the New World, especially in the second half of the sixteenth century. In 1545 the great silver mines at Potos in Peru were discovered, and their exploitation on a large scale began about 1560. From then on the amount of silver imported was far greater than the amount of gold. One index of the prosperity of Seville is the growth of its population, which became so great that for a while it was surpassed in western Europe only by Paris and Naples. The population of Castile as a whole also increased, especially in the decade of the 1530s. This increase in the size of the population meant a growing internal market for goods to match the New World market.

During the sixteenth century a sharp increase in prices took place throughout Europe; in the second half of the century especially, it was so marked that it has been called the "Price Revolution." In Spain it was even higher than elsewhere. Contemporaries in general were not aware of the connection between the size of the money supply and the price level. Although Jean Bodin, the famous French thinker, has often been given credit for the discovery that prices will rise as the money supply expands, there were actually Spanish writers connected with the University of Salamanca who saw the relationship several years earlier than Bodin. Recent scholarship has established the fact that the amount of imported bullion was not the only factor in the Price Revolution, but it was certainly an important one. The rise of prices in Spain had only a temporarily beneficial effect in stimulating the economy. Later it was harmful, when Spanish goods began to price themselves out of the international market.

The great prosperity of Castile, in fact, was very short-lived. The Spanish economy was not sufficiently advanced to meet the demands of the expanding markets at home, in the New World, and in other parts of Europe. The mistreatment of the Moorish and Jewish populations, which had been very productive economically, may have played a part. Agriculture, long subordinate to the interests of sheep raising, was unable to supply all the food that was required. The rise in food prices left the ordinary Spaniard with little money to buy manufactured goods. The shortage of trained labor, for example in the vital textile industry, meant deficient quality and inadequate output. Spain was increasingly compelled to import manufactured goods and food as well, while the high price of Spanish products on the international market made it difficult to balance imports with exports. Thus the effects of the specie or coined money that came into Spain were mixed. It continued into the reign of Philip II to sustain the imperial enterprises of the crown, but it proved impossible to keep the money in the country. Consequently, after inflating Spanish prices, it passed out of the country to pay for goods from abroad.

Governmental policy must share the blame. The Council of Finance consisted mostly of men without experience in finance and trade who failed to take measures that would make

the New World contribute to the prosperity of the mother country. They encouraged the development of industry in America, which meant the eventual loss of the overseas market for Spanish goods. Still, it was probably the vast expense of Charles V's imperial policy, more than anything else, that was responsible for the financial disasters that overtook Spain. Not until the reign of Philip II was the income from the New World large enough to provide a major source of funds. Charles had to depend on European resources, and in the early years of his reign drew heavily on the Low Countries and Italy. By 1540, he had taken so much from these territories that they could no longer provide for his needs, and he turned more and more, as we have seen, to Castile. He drew relatively little from Aragon, where the Cortes retained more power and where resources, in any case, were slight.

The grants by the Cortes of Castile increased in size during Charles's reign until they were four times as large as in the early years. Charles had other sources besides these grants. With the consent of the pope, he was able to tax the church, which made an indispensable financial contribution. He also was able to collect customs duties and a sales tax known as the alcabala. Titles of nobility were desired on social grounds and because of the tax-exempt status of the nobles, so sales of titles were used from the 1520s as a money-raising device. In spite of all this, Charles had to borrow on a large scale from his own subjects and from bankers. Loans from bankers were secured by future income, so that the crown's sources of revenue came more and more into the hands of the bankers, who were often foreigners. Internal borrowing took the form of the sale of annuities, which were sold in great quantities in Charles's reign. They yielded up to 7 percent and were also paid out of the regular revenues of the crown.

In addition to his problems with the other European states and his other domains in Europe and overseas, which are discussed elsewhere in this volume, Charles had serious problems with the Turks and the Moslems of North Africa. The Hapsburgs were exposed both by land and by sea to the Turks and their allies and tributaries. Under the great sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-66), the Ottomans mounted a land offensive that penetrated deeply into central Europe. In 1521 they took Belgrade. In 1526 at the battle of Mohács, most of Hungary fell to them; the king, Louis II, was killed. Henceforth, the greater part of Hungary was in their hands. In 1529 their advance was checked as they tried and failed to take Vienna.

Louis II had held the elective thrones of Hungary and Bohemia. His widow, Mary, was the sister of Charles V. To succeed her husband, both the Hungarians and the Bohemians elected Ferdinand, who was the brother of Mary and Charles. Charles, therefore, found himself the guardian of the frontier of Christian Europe against the Turks.

From North Africa also the Spanish were menaced by Moslem power. By 1534 Algeria and Tunis were Moslem states ruled by the famous pirate Kheireddin Barbarossa, who acknowledged the Turkish sultan as his overlord and held the position of grand admiral of

the Turkish fleet. From their North African bases, Barbarossa and his Barbary pirates raided the coasts of Spain, assisted, as we have seen, by the Moriscos.

The struggle against the Turks had become a struggle for control of the central Mediterranean. In 1535, during an interval of peace with France, Charles marshaled one of the most formidable expeditions of the century about thirty thousand men and four hundred ships and led it personally against Tunis. After bitter fighting, his troops succeeded in taking the city. It was Charles's greatest success against the Moslems that brought him to the peak of his prestige in Europe. Yet the triumph was brief. Before long Barbarossa was again conducting raids against the coasts of Spain and Italy. In 1536 the French concluded an alliance with the Turks, thereby acknowledging openly a relationship that had existed for a decade. Some of the guns taken by the Spanish in the fight for Tunis were of French manufacture.

The emperor's later efforts against the Turks were unsuccessful. His renewed struggle with the French kept him occupied from 1536 to 1539. In 1538 he undertook a new campaign in alliance with Venice and the pope, hoping to advance into the eastern Mediterranean and even take Constantinople. The combined fleets of Charles and the Venetians, hampered by lack of cooperation, were defeated at Preveza by Barbarossa. In 1540 Venice made a separate peace. In 1541 Charles mounted a great expedition against Algiers. It was a complete failure, Charles's first great defeat and one of the worst disasters of his reign; thousands of men and 150 ships were lost. In the next phase of Charles's war with France, Barbarossa's fleet was a great help to the French. On Barbarossa's death in 1546, his place was taken by Dragut, another formidable pirate. The Turks extended their hold on North Africa, taking Tripoli in 1551, and continued to raid the Mediterranean coasts of Europe and to attack shipping between Spain and Italy. Charles's policy in North Africa and the Mediterranean was a failure, and again the fault lay largely with the emperor himself for scattering his efforts in the pursuit of imperial objectives.

When Charles, worn out by an accumulation of responsibilities as great perhaps as any statesman has ever borne, abdicated his many thrones and went into retirement, he chose to spend his last days in Spain near the monastery of Yuste. Spain had become the home of his choice. His son, who succeeded him as Philip II, was a native of Spain and was destined to spend the greater part of his reign there. In 1555 at Brussels, Charles abdicated to Philip the sovereignty of the Netherlands, and in the following year did the same with Spain and the Spanish possessions. These included the Italian territories of Milan, Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia, Franche-Comt, and the New World empire. The Hapsburg lands in Austria went to Charles's younger brother Ferdinand, who became Emperor Ferdinand I in 1558. Henceforth, there were two branches of the Hapsburg family, but the Spanish and Austrian Hapsburgs cooperated and intermarried to such an extent that it is still possible, for some time after the division, to speak of a Hapsburg power in European politics.

Philip II was born in 1527. Though his early education seems to have been deficient in

everything but Latin, he managed to acquire a knowledge and taste for history and geography. He was fond of books, and built up a library of four thousand volumes. He was a connoisseur of art and a patron of artists; he continued his father's patronage of Titian. The Escorial, the great palace that was built for him, housed one of the finest art collections in the world. He played the guitar and even did a little composing. He was said also to do painting and modeling.

Philip was a devoted family man, affectionate and tender toward his children, except for the ill-fated Don Carlos, an unbalanced and unruly character who died in prison in 1568. Philip was an obedient son, who revered his father and tried to emulate him. He was apparently a more faithful husband than many crowned heads of his day. He was married four times and widowed four times. His last marriage is a good example of Hapsburg inbreeding. The bride, Anne of Austria, was the child of a marriage between Philip's first cousin, Emperor Maximilian II, and Philip's sister Marie. Philip's successor, Philip III, was one of the children of this last marriage.

Philip II's reputation among non-Spaniards and non-Catholics as an inhuman monster has been challenged only since the nineteenth century. His manner is one element in this picture. He was reserved and impassive, never showing emotion publicly. He was grave and courteous in bearing, spoke in a low voice, and never talked of himself. He submerged the man in the king. He had an intense sense of duty, which helped to make him one of the most hardworking of monarchs, spending interminable hours at his desk, year in and year out. His father had left him the advice, "Depend on none but yourself," and he followed it. Since he made all the decisions, and since he was even slower, more cautious, and more hesitant than his father, immense delays occurred in the conduct of public business. One of his officials in Italy once remarked, "If death came from Spain, we should live to a very great age."

Philip was a great believer in the written memorandum; he was one of the earliest of the bureaucratic rulers. He governed through the system of councils and viceroys that had been established, and all matters of state business received thorough discussion in the appropriate councils, including the Council of State, the most important one. However, none of the councils had any decision-making authority. So jealously did the king guard his power that nobody but himself had full information about affairs of state. Sometimes, when he made a decision, the councilors who had discussed the problem would be surprised to learn how much information had been withheld from them.

With all the decisions that had to be made, this system would hardly have worked if the king had been a fast thinker and worker. In Philip's case it was impossible. The king was unable or unwilling to distinguish important matters from trivial ones and to delegate the latter to subordinates. Thus the ruler of the greatest empire of his day would spend hours over minutiae, while matters of immense consequence had to wait. When the Armada was

being prepared for the expedition against England, the king even decided how much water should be mixed with the sailors' wine.

In his efforts to avoid competitors, he kept the great nobles away from the seats of power. His secretaries, who shared more of the king's knowledge than anyone else, were of undistinguished birth. If great nobles were employed, they were given military and diplomatic posts that kept them out of the country. The only member of the class to whom the king ever gave his confidence was the duke of Alva, and even he spent part of his career in disgrace.

Before Philip's reign the Spanish monarchs had moved about, having no fixed residence. Under Philip, Madrid came to be regarded as the capital of Spain, and there the court became settled. The location of Madrid in the geographical center of the country made it seem to a certain extent the appropriate place for the seat of government, but the king's fixed residence deprived most of his subjects of the opportunity to see him and tended to induce a feeling that their king was neglecting them. Other monarchs, including Philip's father, were aware of the importance of personal contact with their subjects as a means of stimulating loyalty and devotion. Philip's subjects had no way of knowing that the solitary and inscrutable figure at his desk was deeply devoted to their interests as he understood them. His Italian subjects were offended at being ruled by a monarchy that came to appear more and more Spanish, while the Aragonese complained that the monarchy was becoming more and more Castilian. One reason for the king's relative immobility was the size of the court, which comprised some fifteen hundred persons, a far cry from the simple days of Ferdinand and Isabella. It must be said that Philip's personal habits were simple and even ascetic.

It was in 1561 that the court came to rest at Madrid. Two years later, in a lonely region of foothills about twenty miles northwest of the city, Philip began the construction of the Escorial, a royal residence, a mausoleum, and a monastery. In the center was a church, and a community of Hieronymite monks was also housed there. Built in honor of St. Lawrence on whose day, August 10, the great victory of St. Quentin was won in 1557, it was shaped like a gridiron, the instrument of the saint's martyrdom. Finished in 1584, it became Philip's favorite residence. Here he buried his father, all his wives except Mary Tudor, and his children who predeceased him. The king's room was as bare as a monk's cell. In the Escorial Philip worked, prayed, died, and was buried.

The Escorial, with its religious character, seems to symbolize the importance of religion in the life of Philip II. He heard Mass daily, and he consulted his confessors and theologians before taking any act that presented a moral problem. His policies he sincerely believed to be for the glory of God and the welfare of the church. Nevertheless, the older view of Philip as a crusader for the Counter Reformation has been questioned in recent years. The guiding principle of his policies, as in the case of other rulers, was reason of state. Though he saw the suppression of heresy as a religious duty, he also believed, as did most others

in the sixteenth century, that the stability of his rule depended on religious uniformity within his domains. While Protestants were afraid of an international Catholic conspiracy, Catholics by the second half of the century could see in Protestantism, especially in its Calvinistic form, an international plot to subvert the Catholic church and Catholic governments. For Philip, this was no mere threat. Calvinism was making inroads in his Netherlands territories, and even in Spain, as we have seen, evidences of heresy cropped up early in the reign.

Philip often had trouble with the papacy. At the time of his accession, the pope was Paul IV, who hated Spain. Philip actually went to war with him, and in 1557 had troops in the Papal States. Sixtus V, one of the most zealous popes of the Counter Reformation, said in 1589, "The preservation of the Catholic religion which is the principal aim of the Pope is only a pretext for His Majesty whose principal aim is the security and aggrandisement of his dominions."¹² Within Spain the pope had little influence; the king controlled the church completely, forbidding appeals to Rome and requiring royal approval for the publication of papal bulls and briefs. The appointment of bishops was in the king's hands, and the clergy were expected to assist in carrying out royal policy.

There was also conflict between the king and the papacy over the decrees of the Council of Trent, ratified by Pius IV on January 26, 1564. Philip found some of the decrees distasteful, such as the one declaring bishops papal delegates; Philip had supported the view that the bishops were divinely appointed. The king hesitated for months to publish in Spain the council's decrees. When he finally did, it was with the proviso that they should not encroach on the rights and privileges of the Spanish crown. This meant in actual practice that some of the council's enactments were invalid in Spain.

In the field of foreign affairs, Philip was at odds with the papacy again and again. This was true even when their interests coincided, as in the Netherlands. Pius V (1566 72) wanted Philip to go to the Low Countries in person, and when he refused to do so, the pope blamed him for all the Spanish misfortunes. While Pius was advocating a peaceful settlement in the Netherlands, Philip was reaching the decision to use force. In the case of England, he utterly repudiated the hostile policy of the popes toward Elizabeth's government, since he was not disposed to weaken the English for the benefit of his enemies the French. He opposed the bull of 1570 excommunicating Elizabeth, and wrote to the queen herself to that effect. After the failure of the Armada, which was launched against England in 1588, Sixtus V (1585 90) refused to pay the subsidy he had promised. The final blow to the already weakened relations between Philip and the papacy came in connection with France. Philip wanted to prevent Henry of Navarre from ascending the French throne; the popes, fearing any further increase in Philip's power, adopted a conciliatory policy toward Henry and recognized him as soon as he embraced the Catholic faith.

On the whole, Philip's record in foreign affairs would probably have to be regarded as

unsuccessful. He failed to achieve his aims in England, France, and the Netherlands. In the Mediterranean struggle against the Turks, the fleet of Spain, Venice, and the papacy, commanded by Philip's half brother, Don John of Austria, won a great victory over the Turks at Lepanto in 1571. The victory, famous and celebrated as it was, had no permanent effects; and Turkish power remained unbroken.

In Portugal Philip scored a success. The Spanish monarchs had long been preparing for the day when they could take over that country by promoting marriages between the members of their family and the Portuguese royal family. Thus when the king of Portugal, Sebastian, died in battle against the Moslems in Morocco in 1578, leaving no direct heir, Philip pushed his claims vigorously. Sebastian's immediate successor was his uncle, Cardinal Henry, who died in 1580. Philip used diplomacy, propaganda, and bribery, but finally had to resort to force. This was successful, and in 1581 he was able to go to Portugal and be recognized as king. The terms of annexation respected the autonomy and constitutional rights of the country, and on the whole the king kept his promises. He lived in Lisbon from 1581 to 1583. The union of Spain and Portugal lasted until 1640, when the Portuguese regained their independence.

In the later years of his reign, Philip had domestic problems as well as foreign ones. In Aragon revolt broke out in 1591. The Aragonese were very jealous of their "liberties" and resentful of the fact that the monarchy was becoming increasingly Castilian. The revolt of 1591 was precipitated by events that appeared to the Aragonese as violations of their precious liberties. One was the appointment of a viceroy who was not Aragonese. Another was the king's attempt to arrest his former secretary, Antonio Prez, who had escaped from prison, fled to Aragon, and taken refuge behind the liberties. The king's attempts to have Prez apprehended led to mob violence and the death of a royal officer. Philip was meticulous in his respect for legal rights and procedures, but finally in October 1591 he sent an army of twelve thousand men into Aragon. He subdued the country without much difficulty, and imposed a relatively mild settlement. Prez had escaped to France, and only a few men were put to death, while most were pardoned. Philip could have destroyed the Liberties of Aragon, but he did not do so. Changes were made in the constitution to strengthen royal control at the expense of the power of the nobles, a power that had been used for selfish ends and not for the general welfare. As in the case of Portugal, the king respected local rights. His concept of empire, like his father's, was that of a group of territories under one ruler, but otherwise possessing their separate identities and institutions.

Probably the most serious development in Spain was the continued decline of the economy. All the factors that have been identified earlier continued to operate and need not be repeated here in detail. The landed aristocracy remained wealthy because of its control of the land, and the peasants and artisans became more and more wretched. Those who worked got little return for their labor and had to bear the burden of higher taxes. Increasing numbers were unemployed, and added to the crowds of beggars and vagabonds

who swarmed over Castile and the brigands who terrorized Aragon and Catalonia. Agricultural production continued to decline, and increasing amounts of grain had to be imported. Grain was even purchased from the Dutch, against whom Spain was fighting during most of the reign.

Even the mesta suffered at this period, although the government still favored it at the expense of agricultural interests. The high price of Spanish wool made it difficult to export, and the size of the flocks shrank; from 1552 to 1563 the number of sheep went down by 20 percent. Industry too was declining, especially in Castile. Excessive government regulation and guild restrictions hampered its development, while the adverse trade balance made it impossible to earn the needed capital through normal commercial channels. The government failed to lend adequate support to industry; the one source of capital available to Spain was America, but the wealth acquired from there was used for war expenditures, to pay for imported goods, or for luxuries.

The most important causes of Spanish industrial decline, however, were the rise in prices and the high level of taxation. The effects of these factors were not clearly understood, and the government's ignorant attempts to deal with them only made matters worse. It was believed that excessive exportation of goods helped to account for the rise in prices, and so a policy of forbidding exports and encouraging imports was adopted. The burden of taxes fell much more heavily on industry than on agriculture, driving businessmen to invest their capital in land rather than in business enterprise. The growing needs of the state, arising from Philip's wars, raised taxes and further helped to ruin industry.

The government was, of course, affected by these economic forces. While its revenues increased, its debts rose even faster. At several points during his reign, Philip was forced into what amounted to bankruptcy. In 1557 he suspended payment on government debt, an act which weakened the credit of the government and made money more difficult to get. Thereafter the Spanish government had to pay higher interest rates on the money it borrowed. It had to continue borrowing, however, and by 1575 had pledged all its revenues in advance to its creditors, most of whom were foreign bankers. By this time, the campaigns in the Netherlands were costing an immense amount, and there were no longer any lenders willing to supply money. Therefore, on September 1, 1575, the crown once more made a virtual declaration of bankruptcy. The government eventually made a settlement by repudiating much of its indebtedness, causing great distress both at home and abroad; the two largest banks in Seville, for example, failed as a result.

These financial failures had their effects on foreign policy. The crisis of 1557 made it impossible to continue the war with France and thus helped to bring about the Peace of Cateau-Cambrisis. The breakdown in 1575 meant that the troops in the Low Countries went without pay for months, until they finally sacked Antwerp in November 1576 in "the Spanish Fury." Nevertheless, Philip did not abandon his ambitious policies, until even the wealth of the Indies was inadequate. New taxes were levied, especially in Castile, and fell

heavily on the poor, since now essential foodstuffs were taxed. In 1596 Philip once more had to admit bankruptcy. This time it meant the final blow to his imperial designs, already thwarted in one theater after another.

The New World was ceasing to be an unfailing source of support for the Spanish economy. The Dutch and English, Protestant and maritime nations at war with Spain, were encroaching on the Indies trade. The native population of Spanish America was decimated by epidemics, so that the Spanish could no longer count on an adequate labor force. The development of the colonial economy meant that the New World was producing the very goods previously imported from Spain: cloth, grain, wine, and oil.

At the end of the century, natural catastrophes intervened; crop failures and plague took a heavy toll. The labor supply was diminished and higher wages became necessary. A mood of bitterness, cynicism, and defeat spread over the country. The atmosphere of national disillusionment forms the background of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, written in the first two decades of the seventeenth century. By the end of the reign of Philip II, Spain was going into a decline which would cause it eventually to sink to a position of secondary political importance among the European states, yet this decline is more evident to us than it was to contemporaries. When Philip II died on September 13, 1598, the country that he left to his successor still appeared to be a great and imposing power. Only time would reveal to what an extent the foundations of its strength had been undermined during the years of its greatest splendor.

THE REVOLT OF THE NETHERLANDS

It was during the sixteenth century that the Netherlands came under Spanish rule, and it was also during this century that a revolt began that was to deprive Spain of the northern part of this territory and give birth to a new nation.

By 1500 the group of provinces that constituted the Netherlands, or Low Countries, possessed an economic, cultural, and strategic importance far out of proportion to their modest geographical extent. They were centers of a flourishing trade and industry that had produced great and prosperous cities and a vigorous merchant class. This was especially true of the county of Flanders, with Ghent and Bruges, and the duchy of Brabant, with Brussels and Antwerp. For the greater part of the sixteenth century, Antwerp was the greatest financial and commercial center of Europe.

The rise of the great merchants and industrialists in the cities, and later the seizure of power by the craftsmen organized into guilds that came to dominate city governments, had made the histories of many cities a story of turbulence and upheaval. The urban classes had won recognition of their rights and privileges at the expense of nobles and of princes secular and ecclesiastical. In general, lay rulers proved easier to deal with than

ecclesiastical ones. A good deal of anticlerical sentiment had grown up, coupled with a zeal for religion. Education had been to some extent wrested from clerical control, at least on the elementary level. The religious devotion present in the Low Countries was manifested in the movement known as the *Devotio Moderna*, or Modern Devotion, discussed in Chapter 9, and in the spread of radical theological ideas that later found expression in the left wing of the Reformation.

To grasp something of the cultural flowering of the Netherlands in the late Middle Ages and on the eve of the Reformation, one has only to remember the masters of Flemish art in the fifteenth century and to bear in mind that Erasmus was a Dutchman who never lost the impress of his early training in the Netherlands by the Brethren of the Common Life.

From about 1300, various forces combined to bring about a decline in the independence and power of the towns. They were governed by narrow oligarchies of craftsmen who ruled in their own interest and without much thought for the general welfare. They were in conflict with the great industrial enterprises, which they could not control. The workers were discontented with their position, and their unhappiness led to a number of violent but unsuccessful revolts. Conflicts within the towns were intensified by foreign complications. The French kings were consistently interested in annexing Flanders, and the different classes within the Flemish towns took sides either for or against these ambitions. Opposed to the kings were the counts of Flanders, in alliance with the workers, while the upper classes sided with the kings. When Philip the Fair of France defeated the count and annexed Flanders in 1300, his victory was annulled by a popular rising, which led to the massacre of French troops by the workers in the so-called *Matins of Bruges* in 1302.

While the cities were torn by internal conflicts, they were also afflicted with hostility and jealousy of one another, making it impossible for them to combine for the protection of their common interests. Consequently, they fell prey to the centralizing policies of the great Burgundian dukes of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and later of the Hapsburgs, under whose rule they had fallen by the start of the sixteenth century.

The spectacular career of the duchy of Burgundy is one of the most interesting political developments of the late Middle Ages. For a while Burgundy seemed on its way to becoming one of the great powers of western Europe and constituted a serious threat to France. Ironically, it was the French monarchy itself that unwittingly raised up this enemy. King John the Good of France (1350-64), having acquired Burgundy at the extinction of the line of Capetian dukes, bestowed the duchy on his youngest son, Philip. The duchy, a fief of the crown, lay on the eastern border of France, just south of the county of Champagne. Philip entered into his inheritance in 1364. His marriage to the daughter of the count of Flanders brought him that important territory on the count's death in 1384. Thereafter, Philip known as Philip the Bold and his successors acquired by marriage, purchase, and conquest a vast agglomeration of territories in the Low Countries,

the Holy Roman Empire, and France. Some of their lands they held as fiefs of the French crown, others as fiefs of the Holy Roman Empire. In addition to the original duchy of Burgundy and Flanders, they came to hold the Free County of Burgundy (Franche-Comté), Artois, Picardy, Brabant, Hainaut, Luxembourg, Holland, and Zeeland and this is not a complete list.

The dukes, ruling over a rich and flourishing territory, presiding over perhaps the most splendid court of its time, aspired not unnaturally to the creation of an independent state. Their ambitions appeared to be favored by the desperate condition of France during the Hundred Years' War. The four dukes who ruled Burgundy were men of marked ability. Philip the Bold died in 1404, to be succeeded by his son John the Fearless, who was murdered in 1419. His son, Philip the Good, had the longest and most successful career, ruling until his death in 1467. The end of the great Burgundian state came with Philip's son and successor, Charles the Bold (or Charles the Rash), who died fighting the Swiss at Nancy in 1477. In Charles we can see most clearly the force of the ambition that drove his dynasty; he fought incessantly (and, as his epithet implies, recklessly) for territory such as Lorraine, which would consolidate his domains and enable him to become a great monarch. His premature death, coming before he could achieve his ambitions, may seem to have meant failure, but in the long run the work of the great dukes endured. In their efforts to create a state, they gave to their disparate territories a unity that had not previously existed, and laid the foundations for the modern nations of Holland and Belgium.

Charles's successor was his young daughter, Mary. Louis XI of France took advantage of the situation to recover the original duchy of Burgundy, which remained French in spite of the claims asserted by the descendants of Charles. That the Burgundian state did not disintegrate is a tribute to the work of the great dukes. It is also due in part to the fact that Mary's husband, Archduke Maximilian, later Emperor Maximilian I, was able to defend and preserve the greater part of the Netherlands. In this way the Low Countries became part of the Hapsburg lands, and one of the areas of friction between the Hapsburgs and the French crown. Mary died in 1482; in 1494 the son of Maximilian and Mary, Philip the Handsome, became ruler of the Low Countries. A native of the area, he was a popular ruler. During his reign, the Netherlands reached new heights of prosperity, and Antwerp entered the era of its greatest influence. A class of great capitalists flourished, and alongside them a real industrial proletariat.

It was Philip's marriage to Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, that brought the Low Countries into the Spanish orbit, and made them a part of the vast domains of their son Charles, later to be Charles I of Spain and Emperor Charles V. Charles himself was born in Ghent, as we have seen, and brought up in the Low Countries. His father died when Charles was six, and during his childhood the Netherlands were ruled by his aunt Margaret, his father's sister, who was in charge of the boy's upbringing. In 1515 he was declared of age as duke of Burgundy. As a native of Flanders, he was popular in the

Netherlands and never quite lost his rapport with his subjects there, although the relationship was strained by the tremendous financial demands that Charles made on the Low Countries to help support his far-flung ventures. He drew mercilessly on their wealth, especially in the first half of his reign, until they had reached the limit of their resources.

Both the Burgundian dukes and their Hapsburg successors pursued policies that helped to build up a national consciousness in the Netherlands. The Burgundians established a bureaucracy to administer the territory as a whole, and developed the Estates-General, made up of representatives of the provincial assemblies or estates, as a means of raising money. These meetings helped create a sense of unity. The noble Order of the Golden Fleece, founded by Philip the Good, had helped to give the members of the great nobility a sense of nationality. Charles V continued the work of building toward a unified state. He conquered several outlying provinces and added them to his domains; as late as 1543, Gelderland became the seventeenth Netherlands province to be ruled by him.

Charles carried out a number of measures aimed at centralizing the government of the Low Countries. In 1549 he required all the provinces to take an oath of fealty to his designated successor, his son Philip. In each province he established organs of the ruler's authority, including the official known as the stadtholder, the chief man in the province. Charles also reorganized the central administration. An ordinance of 1531 set up three specialized councils: the Secret Council, for justice; the Council of Finance; and the Council of State. The great nobles sat on the Council of State and discussed matters of general policy; it was from their ranks that the stadtholders were chosen.

During the reign of Charles, the nobles served their prince devotedly, and he never went too far in his relations with the Netherlands. When he could not get his way, he yielded. No doubt his need for money, as well as the fear that a harsh policy would push the Low Countries in the direction of his great enemy France helped to impose this restraint.

The problem of religion became a serious one in the Low Countries during the reign of Charles. Protestant ideas began to make headway there from an early date. It was the radical side of the Reformation, especially Anabaptism, which had the greatest appeal at first, though there was some Lutheranism as well. Charles was determined to wipe out heresy in his domains by every means available to him. He issued severe edicts, which culminated in the so-called Edict of Blood of 1550: This prescribed the death penalty for all offenses of this nature. This harsh policy was so contrary to the spirit and wishes of the people that it was never thoroughly enforced. There were a number of executions, but they failed to destroy heresy. Instead, they had the effect of driving the new ideas underground, causing many persons to leave the country, and even attracting many to the doctrines for which they saw their fellows ready to die courageously.

Before Charles abdicated, he had seen his son and successor, Philip, married to the

English queen Mary Tudor. For Charles, the English alliance was essential to the security of the Netherlands, and he hoped it would be preserved. With the death of Mary in 1558, however, the link was broken, weakening the Spanish hold on the Low Countries. Philip's foreign birth and failure to understand the outlook and traditions of the area as his father had done, was to prove a further source of trouble, especially because he was determined to rule there as an absolute monarch without respecting the liberties of the provinces or the prerogatives of the great nobles.

One thing that Philip knew quite well about the citizens of the Netherlands, was that they were rich. He wanted them to contribute a share of their wealth to meet his urgent needs. They proved unwilling, however, to part with their money to support enterprises foreign to their interests. Money had been traditionally raised through the Estates-General, and during the earliest years of his rule, Philip had to abide by this method. But when frequent meetings of the estates gave them a chance to express their objections to his policies, he turned to absolutist methods, secretly instructing the regent, Margaret of Parma, not to call the estates again.

Margaret was Philip's half-sister, the illegitimate daughter of Charles V by a Flemish mother. Philip deprived her of all real power by naming her advisers and governing through them. The chief one was Antoine Perrenot, lord of Granvelle, whom he named president of the Council of State. The native nobles, accustomed to playing an important role in the government, were deliberately set aside, and made their resentment known.

In 1561 Philip was prevailed upon to make one important concession by withdrawing three thousand Spanish soldiers who had been stationed in the country during the war against France and who were hated by the natives. Even this move, however, may have been dictated more by financial considerations than by the local opposition, which deeply offended the king.

An even more inflammatory issue was the royal plan to reorganize the ecclesiastical structure of the Low Countries. Hitherto parts of the area had been under foreign archbishops Reims and Cologne. Now there were to be three new archbishoprics, Cambrai, Malines, and Utrecht, with the archbishop of Malines serving as chief prelate. There were also to be fourteen new bishoprics, with the bishops named by the crown, not by the cathedral chapters as before. Since the bishops would be members of the Estates-General, the power of the crown in the affairs of the Netherlands would be increased. Philip also hoped that enlarging the number of bishoprics would make it possible to deal more effectively with heresy. The bishops were to be good theologians, so that the great nobles would no longer be able to provide for their sons in this manner.

From the standpoint of administrative efficiency, and from a national and linguistic point of view, the plan had much to recommend it. Nevertheless, it aroused widespread

opposition among all classes. In most cases, the new bishops required the intervention of armed force before they could enter their dioceses, and in some cases they had to wait several years. Granvelle was named archbishop of Malines, and in 1561 he was named cardinal. His position made him the chief target of discontent, and the nobles took the lead in a movement to get him removed from office. Three of the most prominent nobles Orange, Egmont, and Hoorn withdrew from the Council of State. In this case, as in that of the troops stationed in the Netherlands, Philip gave in, and in 1564 Granvelle was removed.

William of Nassau, prince of Orange (1533-84), also known as William the Silent, was the greatest of the nobles. He was stadtholder of the provinces of Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht. He had inherited vast estates and great wealth, but his lavish scale of living had brought him into debt. The greater part of his expenses, however, went for the welfare of his tenants and the payment of his troops, since his position made him commander in the armed forces of his three provinces. Brought up a Lutheran in Germany, where he was born, he had become a Catholic when he went to live at the imperial court in Brussels. He had enjoyed the confidence of Charles V, but was on very cool terms with Philip. Time would show him to be unalterably opposed to religious persecution.

His attitude on this subject was made clear at a meeting of the Council of State on December 31, 1564, after Philip had ordered the enforcement of the decrees of the Council of Trent in the Netherlands. "However strongly I am attached to the Catholic religion," William said, "I cannot approve of princes attempting to rule the consciences of their subjects and wanting to rob them of the liberty of faith."¹³

Other Catholics besides William, including the regent Margaret, urged the king to moderate the harshness of his religious policy. Philip's answer was to instruct Margaret to enforce strictly the laws against heresy. Orange, Egmont, and Hoorn protested by resigning again from the Council of State.

By the end of 1565, Philip's reassertion of his policy of repression had brought a tremendous wave of protest which spread throughout the entire territory. Out of it came a league or confederation of lesser nobles determined to secure a mitigation of religious persecution. The leaders of the movement were Protestant, but they enlisted many Catholic nobles in their cause. This group drew up a petition which was known as the "Compromise," protesting against religious persecution.

In April 1566, several hundred nobles gathered in Brussels to present their petition to the regent. When someone referred to them as "beggars," they adopted this as their name and began to wear the chains and wooden cups by which beggars were distinguished. Margaret gave in and suspended persecution until the question should once more be submitted to the king. The Protestants went beyond the terms given by the regent and

began public preaching all over the country. Soon the movement went beyond preaching, and outbreaks of iconoclasm took place. In all this, the Calvinists, though still a minority among the Protestants, took the lead. William of Orange, aware that violent resistance to the king's policy would be self-defeating, tried without success to moderate the behavior of the Protestants. Margaret, in order to calm things down, issued the Accord on August 24, 1566, in which she permitted Protestant preaching and promised that the Protestants could build their own churches if they restored those that they had seized from the Catholics. She apparently never intended to fulfill these promises, however.

Philip was quite unmoved by protest; he never wavered in his determination to crush heresy and rebellion by force. Orange had come to see that no concessions could be expected from the king and that eventually armed resistance would be necessary. Meanwhile, the government was getting the upper hand and, contrary to the Accord, was silencing Protestant preachers. It was now clear to William that his moderate position was untenable, and he left the Low Countries for Germany in April 1567.

In August the duke of Alva entered Brussels with an army. One of his first acts was to arrest Egmont and Hoorn who had refused to join William and who persisted in trusting the king. To try the rebels he set up a court, the Council of Troubles, which the people called the "Council of Blood." It undertook to stamp out dissent by means of arrests, torture, confiscation of property, and executions. Many left the country; thousands were arrested and subjected to some form of punishment. The regent Margaret resigned her position and left the Low Countries.

In the spring of 1568, William's brother Louis attempted to invade the Netherlands. Alva answered this threat by further executions. Egmont and Hoorn were rewarded for their loyalty to the king by being put to death in Brussels on June 5, 1568. Alva then defeated Louis.

William was building up an army in preparation for an invasion. In an appeal to public opinion, he published his Justification in April 1568. In this document he tried to escape the stigma of rebellion by asserting his continued loyalty to Philip, blaming the troubles in the Netherlands on the king's advisers. He was able to build up a force of twenty-five thousand, but he was short of money and, therefore, had to strike before his funds were spent. He invaded the Low Countries in September in the neighborhood of Lige, counting on a popular uprising. The people did not rise; the French Huguenots, who had promised substantial help, sent inadequate reinforcements; an attack by Alva cost heavy casualties; and money and supplies ran out. William and his remaining troops retreated to France, but were ordered out of the country. Desperately ill, unable to pay his men, utterly defeated at least for the time being William found himself forced to escape from his own troops. Alva thought he was finished, but he was not. He was beginning to see that the success of the rebellion depended on two things: the support of the Calvinists, who formed the heart of the resistance, and foreign help.

A financial issue united the people in protest as religion by itself could probably have never done. Alva's desire to render the crown independent of grants by the Estates-General led him to propose a perpetual sales tax of 10 percent on every article sold. In the economy of the Low Countries, based largely on trade and industry, such a tax would mean disaster, and strong objections were registered, even by Alva's own advisers. Nevertheless, in 1571 he announced that it would be collected. In many places people simply refused to pay, and in this instance the use of force proved futile. The economy suffered, unemployment grew, and popular discontent reached enormous proportions.

William of Orange had in the meanwhile been getting ready for a renewed attempt to invade the Low Countries, and had been receiving invaluable help from a group of men known as the "Sea Beggars." These were a collection of seamen from the Netherlands, England, and France, who carried out raids along the coasts on William's behalf. They were disreputable, disorderly, and cruel, committing acts of destruction not only against the Spanish but also against friends of their own cause. Churches, priests, and monks were among their favorite targets. In some ways they were no better than pirates, but the gains of their plunder provided William with much needed money after the losses of his disastrous invasion of 1568. When things looked darkest for the cause of freedom, their successes kept alive a spark of hope.

For a while they were able to use English ports, but Elizabeth denied them this privilege in March 1572, endeavoring to protect the commerce of England and friendly countries from their depredations. In desperate need of a base, they captured the town of Brill in Zeeland. This was the first great military success of the rebels and was followed by others, until most of the towns of Holland and Zeeland were brought under William's authority.

Orange had been counting on aid from the Huguenots, but these hopes were wiped out by the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of August 24, 1572. He was forced to turn more and more to the northern provinces, Holland and Zeeland. To control these provinces it was necessary to have command of the sea, which the Spanish never succeeded in gaining. While Alva with great cruelty was suppressing revolts in the rest of the Low Countries, Holland and Zeeland held out, their resistance stiffened by the Calvinists who fled there from the areas that Alva was able to subdue. Even so, the towns often had to be forced by the Sea Beggars to accept the rule of Orange.

The revolt of the Netherlands was not the spontaneous rising of an overwhelmingly Protestant people against Catholic tyranny. The Calvinists dominated the revolt, but as a determined and efficient minority able to impose its will in much of the country through the abnormal conditions produced by the war. William never condoned religious persecution or the forceful conversion of Catholics to Calvinism, and he always tried to suppress the excesses of the Sea Beggars. In 1573 he became a Calvinist, but he never

regarded the Catholics as enemies. His ideal was the formation of a free and unified nation, in which Catholic and Protestant would live together in peace. In this he was ahead of his time. The mutual hatred of the religious confessions made the realization of his ideal impossible.

The fighting begun between the Spanish and the rebels went on for about forty years. In general, the Spanish were superior in land fighting, but their successes were partly offset by lack of money, which led to a number of mutinies by their unpaid troops. The Sea Beggars fought on the side of the rebels as is shown by the siege of Leyden in 1574. The city had no garrison and was short of supplies. Only a determined minority maintained the resistance; most of the citizens, and the magistrates themselves, were lukewarm and inclined to surrender. As the siege went on and the sufferings of the inhabitants grew, the situation became extremely serious. In this crisis, William persuaded the estates of Holland to open the dikes and flood the land around the city. Thousands were made homeless and miles of fertile soil were inundated, but Leyden was saved. This act of heroism and self-sacrifice provided a great stimulus to the courage of the rebels and their will to resist. As a reward to the city and a memorial to its liberation, William founded the University of Leyden.

In 1573, Philip recalled Alva, whose brutal policy had clearly failed. Philip's attempts to offer a more conciliatory policy were doomed by his refusal to make concessions on religion or to remove his troops, and by the behavior of the troops themselves. In 1576, the year after Philip's second bankruptcy, his long unpaid army in the Low Countries mutinied and overran much of Flanders. The climax came in November when the soldiers, completely out of control, sacked Antwerp in what was called "the Spanish Fury." It was a shock comparable to the Sack of Rome half a century earlier. The soldiers stripped Antwerp of its wealth, killed seven thousand persons without regard to age or sex, and left about a third of the great city in flames.

This event temporarily united the provinces in a unanimous determination to get rid of the Spanish troops, embodied in a treaty known as the Pacification of Ghent, signed within a month of the Sack of Antwerp. The Spanish cause was further compromised by the behavior of Don John of Austria, who had been sent by his half-brother Philip as governor to the Low Countries. Chafing at the limitations imposed on his authority and ambitions both by the king and by the Netherlanders, he made the fatal mistake of taking by surprise the castle of Namur in July 1577, and trying, though unsuccessfully, to do the same thing at Antwerp. The revulsion of feeling was so strong that the Estates-General, meeting at Brussels, asked William of Orange to assume the government of the Netherlands. After some hesitation, he accepted. His support was not unanimous; it came chiefly from the popular party. Among the upper classes of nobles, clergy, and magistrates there were many who were not friendly and were beginning to turn away from the cause of the revolt. Thus long-standing class rivalries endangered the unity for which William never ceased to work.

In 1578 Don John died. His successor was Alessandro Farnese, duke of Parma, son of Margaret of Parma who had been the governor of the country earlier. Parma was one of the great men of this age, the leading general of the day, a skilled diplomat, and a man of outstanding integrity. It is perhaps characteristic of Philip that he never showed him the appreciation that he deserved, although it was through Parma's skill that much of the Netherlands was in the end saved for Spain.

A number of factors played into the hands of the Spanish and their commander. The behavior of the Calvinists, who violated the terms of the Pacification of Ghent by forcefully imposing their religion in Flanders where they were a minority, alienated the nobles. The intervention of foreign princes on the side of the rebels caused disaffection even among the people whom they were ostensibly aiding. William was always convinced of the necessity of assistance from a powerful outside dynasty, but he was unfortunate in the men who offered themselves for the task. The Austrian archduke Matthias was a harmless nonentity; the duke of Anjou, brother of the last three Valois kings of France, was self-seeking, dangerous, and unpopular; the Calvinist John Casimir, Elector Palatine, was belligerent and irresponsible, and meddled in the internal affairs of the country.

The ethnic and linguistic division of the country also worked against the cause of unity. Most of the provinces were inhabited by people of Germanic origin, who spoke a Germanic language. Along the southern edge were the seven Walloon provinces, which were French in speech, Catholic in religion, and controlled by the nobles. The long-standing antagonisms between these two groups of provinces helped Parma to win the Walloons over. In 1579 these provinces formed the Union of Arras, by which they pledged themselves to remain loyal to Philip and the Catholic church. Soon afterwards, the members of the union made peace with the king.

The answer to this was the Union of Utrecht, which joined several of the northern provinces under William of Orange. Within the territory of this union, the Catholic religion was ruthlessly suppressed, sometimes with the use of troops and in violation of previous agreements. William saw in all this the threatened wreck of his own aims, and only reluctantly and after some delay did he consent to join the union.

With the formation of the two unions in 1579, the conflict assumed a definitively religious character; it was now Catholic against Protestant, and the permanent split in the country was foreshadowed. The final division, however, would not be that of the two unions; instead of following racial and linguistic lines, it would be based on geographic and military considerations. The areas that Parma was able to control would remain Spanish; those parts of the country protected by the sea and the rivers would preserve their independence. Eventually much of the Walloon territory, weakened by the division and by the decline in Spanish power, was to fall to Louis XIV and be absorbed into France.

In 1580, Philip proclaimed William of Orange an outlaw, forbade obedience to him, and put a price on his head. William's answer, which appeared later in the year, was the Apology, in which he presented a theoretical justification for resistance. Philip, he claimed, had failed in his duty and forfeited the allegiance of the people of the Netherlands. This defense, with its implication of a contract between ruler and ruled, is closely related to the political ideas that were being developed by the French Huguenots. Indeed, Philippe du Plessis-Mornay, who may have written one of the most famous of the Huguenot tracts, was with William at this time.

The same line of thought can be seen in the act by which the Estates-General in 1581 formally declared their independence of Spain. Philip, it was asserted, had forfeited his rights by breaking his oath to the people and violating his obligations to them. William of Orange was offered the position of sovereign, but refused it, so the Estates-General merely recognized him as head of the government until a new sovereign could be found to replace Philip.

In 1582 at Antwerp, an attempt was made to assassinate William of Orange. The would-be murderer, a clerk employed by a Portuguese merchant, was killed on the spot by onlookers. William survived, although he was very seriously wounded. His narrow escape did not make him more careful; he had always made a point of being accessible to those who wished to see him and of leaving his house open to everyone, and he continued to live in the same way. The danger to his life was great; several men at various times hoped to kill him and collect the reward. All were detected in time, until one Balthasar Grard, who for a long time had dedicated himself with fanatical intensity to the task, murdered William at Delft on July 10, 1584.

William of Orange was one of the greatest men of his age, and one of the truly great men of all ages. On his tomb the estates placed the words "Father of the Fatherland," and never have these well-worn words been more fitting. He was truly the father of a new nation, which would be known as the Dutch republic or the United Provinces. He had loved his people as a father and had given everything for them. In the depths of defeat and humiliation he had not given up to despair, and in times of success he had remained untouched by the arrogance of power or the temptation to be a dictator.

His dearest dream would never come true a united Netherlands, in which men of differing religious faiths would live together in mutual tolerance. In 1585 Parma took Antwerp, the greatest city of the Low Countries, which had at one time been the most important center of the revolt. Its fall, coming so soon after the death of the great leader, made the cause of the resistance seem hopeless, and Holland and Zeeland were not expected to hold out. But they did hold out, and it was Antwerp that declined. After its surrender, the Beggars from the North cut it off from the sea, and its trade was ruined. Thousands of refugees, taking wealth and industrial skills with them, left the city and went north. And as the South

declined, the North prospered.

The death of William finally brought Elizabeth I of England to intervene directly on the side of the rebels. She had allowed English volunteers to fight against Spain and she may have helped William financially. After his death she consented to send an army, in return for the towns of Brill and Flushing as security. Her troops, which arrived in 1585, were incompetently commanded by the earl of Leicester, who disobeyed orders by accepting a position of sovereignty and interfered in the internal politics of the Low Countries. He recovered none of the territory lost to the Spanish; in fact, further areas were lost. He returned to England in 1587 and died the following year. Once more it had been shown that the Netherlands would have to depend chiefly on themselves for their freedom.

Philip helped to bring about his own failure in the Low Countries by attempting to do too much in too many places. In 1588, Parma was diverted to "the Enterprise of England," the ill-fated Armada expedition. In the early years of the following decade, he was sent twice into France to oppose Henry of Navarre. Meanwhile, Philip had become distrustful of Parma without any good reason and had decided to remove him; the great general died in 1592 before he had become aware of his fall from favor. All these developments helped the rebels, who benefited also from their growing prosperity. This prosperity was most strikingly apparent in the province of Holland, which increasingly became the backbone of the resistance, with Amsterdam replacing Antwerp as the greatest city of the Low Countries. Holland was paying most of the expenses of the war, partly from the revenues of trade with the provinces loyal to Spain. There was even a certain amount of trade with Spain itself.

The predominance of Holland was not unopposed within the ranks of the rebels. An internal conflict was going on between the wealthy class which dominated the towns, a class that was especially strong in Holland, and the lower middle class led by the Calvinist clergy. The latter group tended to see political events from a religious point of view, while the wealthy oligarchs, though they were also Protestants, felt that the church should be kept subordinate to the civil authority. Their overriding allegiance was to freedom rather than to religion, and they had no intention of trading Spanish tyranny for the tyranny of the Calvinist church. They therefore fought the persistent efforts of the church to dominate the state. The outcome of the struggle on the whole favored the oligarchy with its more secular outlook. Their victory was the victory of the province of Holland, which also provided the civil and military leaders who proved able successors of William of Orange. The civilian leader was Oldenbarnevelt; the general was Maurice of Nassau, one of William's sons, who was able to take the offensive even before the death of Parma.

A further development of Dutch trade (using the term Dutch to refer to the northern provinces) came from Philip's efforts to damage it. When he forbade the use of Spanish and Portuguese harbors to the ships of the rebels, they retaliated by going directly to the sources of the trade. Soon their ships were to be found in the Caribbean, the

Mediterranean, and the waters of the Far East. They increasingly encroached on the trade of the Portuguese Empire in the East, and the climax came in 1602 with the formation of the Dutch East India Company, destined to play an important role in the history of the country.

Even after the death of Philip II in 1598 and the accession of Philip III, fighting continued, but the military situation had by this time reached a point of stalemate, and both sides were anxious to stop the fighting. Discussions toward this end were begun in 1606. Negotiations owed a great deal to the efforts of France and England, which served as mediators. A final peace settlement proved impossible for the time being, because the Spanish demanded that the Dutch give up their trade with the East, which they refused to do. The best that could be obtained was a truce, which was opposed by Maurice, who wanted nothing less than full Spanish recognition of Dutch independence. Finally, however, a truce was agreed to in 1609, for a twelve-year period.

Although fighting was resumed at the end of the truce period and full recognition of the new nation did not come until 1648, by 1609 the Dutch republic, an independent state, had for all practical purposes been born. It was to play a dazzling part in history, and to be, especially in the seventeenth century, one of the great powers of Europe. In art and learning it was to make splendid contributions to civilization. It was to serve as a refuge for victims of religious intolerance elsewhere. It was to create a great colonial and commercial empire. It was to produce, in the person of the great-grandson of William of Orange, the leader of the forces of European freedom against the aggressions of Louis XIV. Many men contributed to this greatness, but none of it would have been possible without the selfless devotion and unconquerable courage of William the Silent. The history of his country is his monument.



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CHAPTER 19

THE COUNTER REFORMATION

In the sixteenth century the Roman church undertook to reform itself. This reform movement, extending into the following century, raised the moral and educational standards of the clergy; inspired the church with a renewed zeal and morale, which enabled it to win back areas endangered by Protestantism; and contributed significantly to producing the Catholic church as we know it today. The chief agencies in carrying out this work were the papacy, which was much different from the papacy of the Renaissance; a group of religious orders, some reformed and some new, most notably the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits; and the Council of Trent. The Inquisition and the Roman Index of Prohibited Books also had a part in the work.

The spirit of the Catholic Reformation was a spirit of zeal and ardor for the faith, a recognition of abuses in the church and a dedication to the work of reform, and an attitude of intolerance toward heresy. The forces in the church that desired conciliation with the Protestants and that might have been willing to make concessions to secure unity were defeated by those who set their faces against all compromise, rejected any thought of concession, suppressed heresy where they could, or simply shut it out. Actually, it would appear the split had become permanent before the Catholic Reformation reached its full activity. What the Catholic reformers did was simply to recognize the accomplished fact and by their intolerance and intransigence help to establish it as a fixture of Christian life. In an age of religious intolerance, no other outcome was likely. It can be said quite accurately that the intolerance of Catholics toward Protestants was equaled only by the intolerance of Protestants toward Catholics and surpassed only by the intolerance of the various Protestant groups toward one another.

The Catholic Reformation is also referred to frequently as the Counter Reformation. If it was truly a Counter Reformation, then it must have been called forth or at least greatly influenced by the Protestant Reformation. But it is also evident that there were widespread impulses for reform within the church before anyone had ever heard of Luther.

Many distinguished men saw the needs of the church and tried early to do something

about them. Among these men were Gian Matteo Giberti and Gian Pietro Caraffa. About 1517 these men and others founded at Rome the Oratory of Divine Love to restore to its proper dignity the observance of Divine Service. This group was not a religious order, and its members took no vows. They worked in Rome until the sack of the city in 1527 forced them to leave.

One of the manifestations of the stirrings in the church was the foundation of new religious orders and the reform or refounding of older ones. The Camaldolese were reformed and brought back to a very ascetic way of life under the leadership of the famous Venetian family of the Giustiniani. In 1524 the Theatines were founded by Caraffa and Gaetano da Thiene. The members were priests, and their aim was the reform of the regular clergy. They were not allowed to beg, and only the rich and noble became members.

Another such order was that of the Clerics Regular of Saint Paul, known popularly as Barnabites, founded by Antony Zaccaria of Cremona with the aim of relieving the sufferings of the people and raising their moral standards. Still another was the Clerics Regular of Somascha, or the Somaschi, who devoted themselves to work in hospitals, orphanages, refuges for prostitutes, and so forth. One of the most famous of the orders associated with this movement is that known popularly as the Capuchins, which arose within and remained part of the Franciscan order. Founded by Matteo da Bascio they received their nickname from their distinctive hoods. The Capuchins met considerable resistance within the Franciscan order, but with the help of Cardinal Caraffa received papal recognition in 1528. Living severely ascetic lives, eating the simplest of foods and wearing the coarsest of garments, they went about doing great works of charity and striving by word and example to turn the thoughts of laymen to God.

Orders of women also were active in this movement. The most famous was that of the Ursulines, founded in 1535 at Brescia by St. Angela Merici, and approved by the pope in 1544. This order, devoting itself to the education of girls, had a great success in both the old world and the new.

The first pope of the Catholic Reformation was probably Paul III (1534-49). His pontificate witnessed the founding of the Jesuit order, the opening of the Council of Trent, and the refounding of the Roman Inquisition.

Paul recognized the need for reform. In 1536 he appointed a commission of nine cardinals to suggest means of reforming the church. This commission was composed of many of the distinguished men who had long been identified with the desire for reform: Contarini, Sadoletto, Giberti, Caraffa, and Pole. This body presented a report in 1537, which contained a detailed discussion of abuses at all levels of the church. It singled out the practice of pluralism and the lives of the clergy. Monasteries were criticized, as was religious instruction in the universities. The report censured bishops, cardinals, and even

the pope. It was attacked by some on whom criticism fell and was suppressed.

The commission was originally established to help prepare for the meeting of a general council at Mantua in 1537. This meeting did not take place, and before a council finally did convene, there had been established perhaps the most significant agency of the Catholic reform, the Society of Jesus, or Jesuit order. The Jesuits were the creation of St. Ignatius Loyola, one of the most remarkable figures of his age. He was Spanish, the youngest of thirteen children of a poor family of the Basque nobility. The date of his birth is not certain, but 1491 is the accepted year. Like other young nobles, he was trained to be a soldier, and it was his gallantry and courage that helped to bring a turning point in his life. In 1521, when the French were fighting to regain Navarre from the Spanish, Loyola was the officer in charge of the defense of Pamplona. When the defenders found themselves far outnumbered and in a hopeless situation, they thought of surrender; but their young captain would not give in. He insisted on continuing the fight against hopeless odds, and as a result exposed himself to a cannon ball that smashed his right leg. When the French had taken the fortress, they treated Loyola honorably, attempted to have his leg set, and sent him home to the family castle of Loyola. Due to clumsy surgery, he found himself with one leg shorter than the other and his military career at an end. During his convalescence, he experienced his conversion. He had hoped to while away the time during his recovery by reading romances of chivalry, but the family library had none of these books. Instead he was forced to read religious literature, and Ignatius felt a new passion take possession of him: the desire to devote his life to the service of God. He carried his military and chivalrous ideals with him into his new career; henceforth, he would be a good soldier of Christ.

In February 1522, he left the ancestral castle. He knew that he was to serve God, but the precise form of his service had not yet become clear to him, though he planned to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. In 1523 he was able to make the journey. On his return to Spain, having concluded that he needed more education in order to fulfill his mission, he went to school. First he studied Latin grammar at Barcelona, undaunted by the fact that as a man in his thirties he was attending school with boys. After that he attended other Spanish universities. During these years, he attracted like-minded followers; they all preached and wore distinctive garb.

These activities caused Loyola to incur the suspicions of the Inquisition, which found him perfectly orthodox but imposed restrictions on his religious activities. These restrictions impelled him to leave Spain and to enroll in the University of Paris in 1528. Here he again had a brush with the Inquisition. His Spanish followers failed to join him in Paris, and he started over again to find fellow workers. The six men he gathered around him were to be the original members of the order he later founded, and their outstanding abilities testify to Ignatius's gift for choosing men. These six young men he was able to imbue with his own fervent desire of devotion and service to God. Before leaving Paris, Ignatius had received his baccalaureate and graduate degrees and had begun the study of theology.

From Paris the little group went to Italy, where Loyola finally decided to found a new religious order. By a bull of September 27, 1540, Paul officially established the Societas Jesu, the Society of Jesus or Company of Jesus, known popularly as the Jesuits. In 1541 Loyola, against his wishes, was elected first general of the order.

The bull establishing the order limited its membership to sixty, but in 1543 Paul III, by another bull, lifted this restriction. Henceforth, there were no limitations to the size of the membership except the very high requirements for admission and the rigorous training. Other privileges followed, which enabled the order to do its work more effectively. For example, the clergy were allowed to dress like ordinary secular priests. Paul III and most of his successors recognized the potential value of these men to the papacy, and found it advantageous to give them the type of organization needed for their greatest effectiveness.

The Constitutions of the order were drawn up and later revised by Loyola himself, and form an impressive monument to his genius for organization. They reflect the military training and outlook of their author primarily in the stress placed on obedience, the basic quality of a Jesuit. He must be completely at the disposal of his superiors, with no more will of his own than a stick that an old man holds; he must be like a corpse.

It was in accordance with the military spirit of the order that its head, the general, had very great power and the order was a highly centralized hierarchy. The general was to be chosen for life by the general congregation, and he was to be responsible only to the pope. The general congregation consisted of representatives from each of the provinces into which the order was divided. It was to meet only at the call of the general, except in the case of his death or his inability to conduct the business of his office.

There were various ranks among the members, the lowest being that of scholastic, or student. Those who finished their education became priests and were eligible for the higher ranks. One of these was that of spiritual coadjutor. This rank was the source of teachers in the order's schools, as well as preachers, confessors, and heads of institutions belonging to the order. They were numerically the largest group. However, the highest rank in the order was that of the "professed," or the "professed of the four vows." In addition to the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, they took an additional vow of special obedience to the pope.

The original purpose of the Jesuits was to reach and convert the masses of people who had strayed from the church. Thus preaching was their fundamental task. The order was not founded originally as a means of carrying on the struggle with Protestants, though this later became one of its activities. The Jesuits also laid stress on the instruction of children in Christian doctrine. They urged more frequent confession and communion than had previously been customary, and in this they were highly successful. As a result, they made

the priest, more than ever before, a soul-guide or director of conscience. The Jesuits became very famous as confessors and even performed this function for kings and princes.

The fame of the order, however, rests to a great extent on other activities that came to assume greater importance than the founder had originally assigned to them: teaching, fighting heresy, and converting the heathen. The Jesuits came to be far and away the most successful educators in the church, and perhaps in all Europe. They were interested primarily in higher education, and came to dominate many universities and seminaries.

The purpose of Jesuit education was the purpose of the order as a whole: to serve God through loyalty to the church. For this reason, the aim of the Jesuit schools was not that of the modern secular university, which is to extend the frontiers of human knowledge even at the cost of long-held preconceptions. The teachers were well prepared, the methods were up-to-date, and the training was excellent, but the curriculum and teaching methods were regulated with a view to creating devoted Catholics. Students had to study a prescribed set of courses, and teachers had to stick to the assigned textbooks and interpretations. Within these limitations, the Jesuits were superb educators.

They came to be perhaps the most effective agents in the combat with heresy. Loyola himself felt that the Reformation was the result of ignorance and corruption on the part of the Catholic clergy. He had no very detailed knowledge of the works of the reformers; he forbade his followers to read the writings of heretics, and followed this counsel himself. His own attitude toward heretics was without bitterness; he hoped rather that they might be won back by persuasion. This was the position adopted by his followers, who generally refused to enter the service of the Inquisition, although they tended to be in favor of depriving heretics of civil rights and of banishing them if they could not reconvert them.

Basic to Loyola's work was his *Spiritual Exercises*. Taking the exercises was the first step that bound his earliest followers to him, and all members of the order have had to take them at regular intervals throughout their lives. Nonmembers and even laymen have been able to take them.

The importance and influence of this deceptively simple little book lies in the qualities that made Ignatius a great leader: absolute devotion to the church, a keen understanding of human nature, insistence on discipline, and common sense. The exercises are to be taken over a period of four weeks, not alone but under the supervision of an experienced guide. They consist of meditations, prayers, and contemplations on Hell and on the life of Jesus. Their effectiveness lies in the skill with which the various faculties are enlisted: the sense, the imagination, and the emotions. At the end of the exercises, the individual who took them was to be purified, devoted to Christ, and willing to give everything in service to the church.

The Jesuit missionaries to England were trained in the school at Douai founded by William Allen. The most successful missionary in Germany was a Dutchman, St. Peter Canisius (1521-97). For thirty years he worked in Germany as a professor at Ingolstadt and as Jesuit Provincial for Upper Germany. He founded many colleges and compiled a catechism that was widely used. He made many conversions and gave a great impetus to the work of winning back to the church parts of Germany that had been in danger of falling away. Through his work and that of others, Catholic princes were able to keep their people loyal to the faith. This was true, for example, in the Hapsburg lands and in Bavaria.

One of the most remarkable successes of the church in winning back lost or doubtful territory came in Poland, where the absence of a powerful central government had facilitated the spread of Protestant doctrines. The Convention of Warsaw passed by the Polish Diet in 1573 had recognized the different faiths and declared perpetual peace between them. The peasantry, however, who comprised the great mass of the Polish population, remained faithful to the Roman communion. Some of the bishops, especially Stanislaus Hosius, worked effectively to restore the traditional faith, and some of the kings were active to the same end. The Jesuits were the chief agents in this work, founding many schools in Poland; Canisius did remarkable work. Poland became and remained a stronghold of Catholicism in eastern Europe.

The restoration of the Catholic church in Hungary and Bohemia, in which the Jesuits played a large role, belongs properly to a later period than that covered by this book. It was thus largely through the efforts of the Society of Jesus, supported by rulers who had sometimes been their pupils, that a great deal of eastern Europe was won back to the Roman allegiance.

One of the most spectacular and controversial of all the Jesuit achievements was the work of converting the non-Christian peoples in the new worlds being opened by the explorers and merchants of Europe. The first and most famous of all the Jesuit missionaries was Francis Xavier (1506-52), one of the original members of the order, who was sent to the Far East at the request of King John III of Portugal. In 1542 he landed at Goa and began his work. Before his death ten years later, he traveled over sixty-two thousand miles. First he worked in India, where he was especially successful with the poorer classes but made little headway among the higher castes. From there he went farther east, working in the Malay Peninsula and in the Moluccas, or Spice Islands.

In 1549 he went to Japan, which was in a state of great disorder because of the weakness of the mikado, or emperor, dominated by the shogun. The great nobles were more or less independent, and armed conflict between them was constant. After many setbacks and great hardships, Xavier managed to make some conversions and to begin planting Christianity in Japan. But now his thoughts had moved on to China, and he was eager to go there and continue the work. He was on his way when he died in 1552, at the age of forty-six, without having received permission to enter the country.

His methods have sometimes been severely questioned. In the first place, he strove for mass conversions, on occasion baptizing hundreds of people at a time or giving the sacrament to whole villages. Some have estimated that he baptized altogether several hundred thousand persons, even a million. While these figures may be exaggerated, they convey an accurate impression. So many conversions in such a short time must surely have been superficial, according to his critics.

In order to get such results, he made a great effort to adapt his methods to the people with whom he was dealing. This was in accordance with Loyola's approach to potential followers, and it came to be typical of the Jesuit missionaries. However, it was also open to criticism on the grounds that it involved concessions to heathen practices that contradicted Christian teachings. In Japan, in order to win people over, Xavier abstained from meat, fish, and alcoholic drink just like the Buddhist priests.

He also saw the need of learning the language and understanding the customs of the people whom he was trying to convert and of adapting himself to their ways. In the short time he had, he was unable to do more than point the way, but others adopted these methods with astonishing results. Whenever he could, he established schools and appointed native-born priests.

One of the most remarkable of Xavier's successors was Matteo Ricci (1552-1610). In 1583, he entered China where he lived for the remaining twenty-seven years of his life. The obstacles in his way were formidable, to put it mildly. China had a civilization older than that of the Christian nations of Europe, with deeply rooted religious and philosophical ideas and ways of thought quite different from those of the West. The Chinese were fearful and suspicious of foreigners. The language was exceedingly difficult, and there were no westerners who knew it well enough to teach it to Ricci. It is a sign of his extraordinary talent and devotion that he was able to surmount all these difficulties to such a degree, in fact, that some of his writings in Chinese were accepted as classics of Chinese literature. He also helped in the process of making reliable knowledge of China available to the West; for example, he suspected correctly that China and Cathay were the same country.

He was able to found communities of Christians in several Chinese cities including even the capital, Peking, where he spent the last decade of his life. Other Jesuits were sent to China, and by the time Ricci died a famous man in China with thousands of friends and acquaintances there were about twenty-five hundred Christians in the country.

In India a beginning had been made by Xavier. Before his coming, the Portuguese had tried to impose Christianity on the natives with no attempt to understand their customs and sensibilities. Christianity had come to be identified in the minds of the Indian population

with foreign conquest. Xavier had tried to change all this, but it persisted even after his death.

The Jesuit Roberto de Nobili (1577-1656) observed and condemned this deplorable state of affairs. He was a Roman aristocrat, a grandnephew of Pope Julius III. Sent out to India in 1606, he followed the methods of Ricci, learning native languages, adopting native ways of life, and condoning the continuance of time-honored practices when he felt they were not irreconcilable with Christianity. Though there was some opposition within the church to his methods because of what appeared to be concessions to idolatry, he was able to gain the approval of Pope Gregory XV in 1623 and continue his work.

In the New World where the natives were often savages, the Jesuits faced a different situation. The Colonial powers Portugal, Spain, and later France had much more effective control in the New World than was possible in such states as China and Japan. It was also true that, whereas the Jesuits were pioneers of Christianity in the Far East, this was not the case in the Americas. Other priests had preceded them, primarily Franciscans and Dominicans. Christianity was imposed on the natives by force of arms, something which was impossible in Asia. In the eyes of the soldiers, sailors, and officials who dominated the colonies, the missionaries were sometimes regarded primarily as a means of keeping the natives orderly or even assisting in the spread of trade.

Before the Jesuits reached the New World, there may have been ten million Christians in Latin America. However, no real attempt had been made to adapt the church to the specific background and outlook of the people. Here as in Asia, only the Jesuits seemed able or willing to use such an approach. They used the methods of accommodation, which were so successful elsewhere: learning the native languages and becoming thoroughly acquainted with the local culture. Because of the primitive character of the tribes among whom they worked, they needed great courage and devotion. These qualities were heroically exemplified in many of them; they willingly faced the risks involved, and some laid down their lives for the cause.

The earliest Jesuit successes in the New World came in the Spanish possessions, since they did not at first receive adequate support in the Portuguese and French territories. The Spanish, who had been guilty of gross mistreatment of the natives, had changed their ways, partly under the influence of Las Casas, and adopted a policy of humane treatment and peaceful conversion. This policy included an effort to civilize the natives before attempting to convert them. Special districts were set up for them, from which outsiders were excluded, in order to protect their goods and their wives. These districts, called "reductions," were established at about the end of the century during the reign of Philip III in what are now Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Ecuador, and Argentina. The Jesuits, under the Spanish crown, were responsible not only for religious instruction but also for government and for military and economic affairs.

The order achieved great successes in civilizing and Christianizing the Indians by using techniques similar to those employed in the East. They studied the native languages, observed the local customs, and carefully distinguished the different types of tribes with whom they had to deal. By adapting their methods to the character and needs of the people among whom they labored, they surpassed the achievements of the missionaries who had preceded them.

It was the fate of the order, partly no doubt because of its successes, to be a source of great controversy and to find bitter enemies within the church as well as outside. In any event, the Society of Jesus has left a permanent mark on the Roman church and thus on the modern world. As the chosen troops of the papacy, they were the spearhead in the fight against Protestantism. They gave the church a new morale and will to victory against the forces that threatened it. They played an important part in the proceedings of the great council that met at Trent in the middle years of the sixteenth century.

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

The Council of Trent met over a period of eighteen years (1545-47, 1551-52, 1562-63). It met the challenge of the Protestant Reformation by clarifying doctrine and by instituting reforms that improved the quality of the clergy. It also helped the church to hold on to what it had retained, regain much of what it had been in danger of losing, and remain a powerful force in the life of Christendom. The council failed to reunite the church; reconciliation with the Protestants proved impossible. This is additional proof that abuses in the church may not be considered the major cause of the Protestant Reformation, because even after the abuses had been corrected, the split remained.

Before the council met, there were two parties within the Catholic church itself, with different views of the proper attitude to be taken toward Protestantism. One group, which drew much of its inspiration from Erasmus, may be called the liberals. These men, some of whom held high rank in the church, still hoped for eventual reconciliation. They were aware of the pressing need for reform, and they hoped for a thorough purification of the church as a way to bring back the heretics. Among these liberals, in Italy for instance, there was a good deal of interest in Protestant writings. The doctrine of justification by faith received serious attention. On the other side was the strict party led by Cardinal Gian Pietro Caraffa. This fiery Neapolitan was the leader of those who were completely opposed to any concessions to the heretics. He felt that the church should stand firmly on its traditional doctrines and suppress heresy by force. He was at the same time convinced of the need for reform, and just as uncompromising an opponent of the abuses in the church as he was of heresy. Thus the future of the church depended on the outcome of the struggle within its ranks as well as the external conflict.

The demand for a general council had been voiced early in the course of the Protestant

Revolt. Luther had called for one even before his excommunication, and the Protestants had long been repeating this plea. There were others, however, who were decidedly less enthusiastic about the idea. The popes and the members of their entourage in the Curia were inclined to be suspicious of the very idea of a general council, remembering the conciliar movement of the previous century, which had challenged papal supremacy in the church in the name of the representative principle. The prospects of a sweeping reform did not attract those persons who profited by abuses, and this included the highest-ranking men in the hierarchy. Clement VII, pope during the crucial years 1523-34 when the Reformation was spreading and taking root, was particularly opposed to the calling of a council.

There were numerous political factors that could not be left out: the desirability of a general council and the attitudes of King Francis I of France and Emperor Charles V. Charles's position was determined by his relationship to the German Lutherans and to France. At times the emperor strongly advocated a council; at other times he was opposed to it. Francis feared that a council might threaten the privileges of the Gallican church, which he so largely controlled, and that it would favor the interests of his old enemy Charles. The fact that the popes were regularly involved in diplomatic alliances with one of the combatants against the other was another stumbling block to the convocation of a council that would be truly ecumenical. Thus a condition of peace, or at least truce, between Francis and Charles was regarded as necessary before a council could be called. It was also necessary that pressure for reform in the church should become overwhelming and that it should become clear to all that no other remedy but a general council would do the job; in other words, self-reform by the Curia was not to be expected. The Sack of Rome of 1527 helped to stimulate discussion of reform and of a general council; the great catastrophe was widely blamed on church corruption, many seeing in it the signs of a divine judgment. Nothing came of all this during the pontificate of Clement VII. His successor, however, came to the papal throne already pledged to the calling of a council, and has the great merit of having actually gotten it started.

Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, who became pope in 1534, took the name Paul III. Although he had publicly advocated a council, it is not clear just how much he favored the idea; it was reported that he actually opposed it. He was, however, under great pressure from the emperor to call a council, and in 1536 he yielded by convoking the meeting at Mantua in May 1537. However, the meeting did not begin until 1545 at Trent after numerous postponements and changes of place. From the start, the divisions of opinion that had long been evident in the church were manifest in the council. The question of procedure was vital. The emperor, still hoping for reconciliation in Germany between the faiths, favored discussion of reform first, hoping this would help bring back the Protestants. He also favored, at least in Germany, concessions to their views, such as communion "in both kinds" and the marriage of priests. Charles probably completely failed to understand the basis of the Reformation; even if he had had his way completely, it would not have ended the schism. The party of Cardinal Caraffa saw things quite differently. While recognizing

the need for reform, it had no inclination to make any doctrinal concessions.

The position of the pope was favored by the proximity of Trent to Italy, which made possible a numerical majority of Italians who backed his position. The Spanish representatives, on the other hand, upheld the views of their king, the emperor Charles. They believed in the conciliar theory and hoped to have reform placed first on the agenda. These Spanish prelates were hostile to the curia, and the mutual antagonism of the Spanish and Italians hampered the work of the council. On the question of doctrinal formulation, however, the Spanish and Italian factions saw eye to eye in opposing any concessions.

The order of discussion represented another compromise; it was decided that reform and doctrine should be discussed concurrently. On matters of reform the disagreements were not great, but doctrinal issues often brought great debates. It was a fact of momentous importance that, on all these matters, it was invariably the strict party that won out. Thus there were no concessions made to Protestant doctrines, with the result that the split became more hopeless than ever. The emperor was angered by the intransigence of the council and refused to accept its decrees.

In the meetings of 1545-47, important doctrinal decrees were passed. The Latin Vulgate was accepted as the official text of the Bible, a decision that did not please some Catholic scholars who were aware of the inadequacies of the Vulgate and would have preferred a text more abreast of recent scholarship. All the books of the Vulgate were declared canonical. This meant that the Roman church accepted certain books of the Old Testament which for the Protestants were apocryphal, because they were not available in Hebrew versions. The Protestant doctrine that the Bible is the sole rule of faith was countered by the decision of Trent that accepted the tradition of the church as coordinate in authority with the Scriptures as a source of divine revelation. It was also affirmed that the Catholic church alone had the right to expound the Bible officially. The decree on justification asserted the necessity for both faith and good works in the process of salvation. The Protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone, the bondage of the will, man's utter depravity and helplessness, and the doctrine of predestination were rejected. On March 3, 1547, the council issued a decree on the sacraments, all seven of which were declared to be true sacraments instituted by Christ.

In 1551 the council reassembled at Trent, summoned by Pope Julius III (1550-55). Decrees were passed on three of the sacraments: The Eucharist, penance, and extreme unction. The Eucharist was declared to be the most excellent sacrament. Though some members favored granting the cup to the laity, it was officially declared that the entire sacrament is present in the bread. The decree also carried a reaffirmation of the doctrine of transubstantiation. The treatment of penance and extreme unction also reaffirmed the traditional positions.

At the insistence of the emperor, who had still not completely abandoned hope for solving the German problem by reconciliation, a delegation of Protestants appeared at the council in January 1552. They were no more eager to attend than the Fathers were to receive them. The subsequent discussions with the Protestants had no other effect than to make more clear than ever the hopelessness of the split.

The resumption of war in 1552 between Charles and the French caused the suspension of the council, which did not meet again for ten years. Its last sessions (1562-63) were marked by bitter conflict between the Italian members, who represented the pope, and the Spanish, who were anti-curial and wanted to reduce papal power. Tension was so great that for a period of ten months starting in September 1562 no business could be carried on. There were riots in the streets and actual bloodshed. Pope Pius IV, however, was able to bring the council to a successful conclusion in December 1563. At its last session it voted to submit its decrees to the pope, an act which recognized his victory and his supremacy in the church. He confirmed all the conciliar decrees and established a congregation of cardinals to see that they were carried out. Thus the conciliar movement of the sixteenth century, like that of the fifteenth, marks a victory for the papacy within the church and another important step in the construction of papal absolutism.

In spite of conflict and diplomatic problems, the sessions of 1562-63 were fruitful. As the sessions began, no reform decrees of real importance had yet been passed; there was resistance at Rome to reforms that would cause a decline in papal revenues. Before the end of the council, however, reform decrees of great importance were issued. After so many fruitless attempts at reform, now at last, when the Christian world had been rent asunder, a really thoroughgoing reformation in the church was instituted. Special attention was given to the bishops; the decrees of the council insisted on the duty of bishops to reside in their dioceses. They must never be absent for more than three months, and not at all during Advent and Lent. Pluralism was forbidden. Bishops were required to preach every Sunday and holy day, and to visit every church within their diocese at least once a year. Each bishop was to exercise careful supervision over his clergy, ordaining only worthy priests and severely disciplining those guilty of misconduct.

Priests also were held to the obligation of residence and were required to preach. To improve the level of priestly education, the council proposed the establishment of a theological seminary in every diocese. Priests were to exercise care for their flocks, explaining the Bible, the sacraments, and the liturgy.

Regulations were also drawn up for the religious orders, dealing with the age of admission and the conditions under which novices could be admitted, the election of superiors, and similar matters. To end the abuse of the granting of abbey in commendam as favors to laymen and other unworthy persons, it was provided that abbey could be granted only to members of religious orders. The enforcement of the rules relating to the orders was entrusted to the bishops.

The reception of the decrees of the council by the Catholic states of Europe varied greatly. In the Italian states, Portugal, Poland, and Savoy, the decrees were soon adopted, and Emperor Maximilian II adopted them in Germany in 1566. Philip II of Spain adopted them "without prejudice to the rights of the Crown." The French never officially accepted them, but in practice France was willing to abide by the doctrinal decrees, though she never recognized those concerning discipline.

Thus the decrees were not adopted universally, enthusiastically, or unanimously. Even where they were accepted, old abuses were not immediately wiped out. Reforming bishops often faced immense difficulties in carrying out the decrees of the council. Resistance to reform might come from the local clergy, who had vested interests in perpetuating abuses, and even from the papacy, whose interference might hinder reform rather than further it. Nevertheless, the work of the council eventually succeeded in infusing a new spirit in the church, which strengthened it immensely and made it capable of defense and even further conquest.

To the popes also fell a larger share of the responsibility for furthering the work of the council. A pope in the mold of Paul IV (who indeed had been impressed by him and given him advancement) was Pius V (1566-72). He was a man of blameless life, who brought his asceticism to the papacy, living in a monastic cell and sometimes going barefoot through the streets of Rome, visiting the churches like a pilgrim. Needless to say, luxury, pomp, and laxity of behavior among the cardinals and other prelates in Rome came to an end.

Pius V lost no time in carrying out the disciplinary decrees of the Council of Trent as far as he could, particularly in Rome. Cardinals, bishops, and priests were recalled to their duties, and the reorganization of the Curia was undertaken in an effort to stamp out such abuses as simony and nepotism. The streets of Rome were cleared of prostitutes. The pope saw to the publication of the Roman Missal and Catechism ordered by the council. He also published a Roman Breviary, as well as the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, whom he made a Doctor of the Church in 1567. He ordered the universities to teach Thomism exclusively.

Pius was also active in admonishing secular rulers to combat heresy and to promote the cause of reform. By threatening the emperor Maximilian II with excommunication, he checked concessions to Protestants in Germany. When the Catholic queen of Sweden took communion "in both kinds," she was excommunicated. Elizabeth I of England, as has been seen, was excommunicated in 1570. In Italy, the activity of the Inquisition was intensified by this pope. He sent troops to France to fight the Huguenots. He was largely instrumental in raising the forces that won the battle of Lepanto in 1571 against the Turks, a glorious but not very fruitful victory. Pius V, one of the outstanding popes of the

Catholic Reformation, helped to give it those qualities of unbending rigidity and zeal for reform that we have already noted. He has since been canonized.

The popes who followed Pius V, though they did not equal him in moral stature, continued the work of reform and reorganization, carrying out the decrees of the council and strengthening the church. Gregory XIII (1572-85) is associated with the calendar reform, which was brought about under his supervision. Under the Julian calendar, which had prevailed since the days of Julius Caesar, there had grown up a discrepancy between the calendar year and the solar year. This discrepancy was now rectified, partly by dropping ten days from the year 1582, when the new calendar went into effect. Thus October 4, 1582, was followed by October 15. Protestant countries like England followed suit only in the eighteenth century, and Russia in the twentieth. Gregory greatly favored the work of the Jesuits, helping their German College of Rome to become a training school for missionaries to Germany. He also favored the Jesuits' Roman College, making it into the Gregorian University and bringing in eminent teachers. He insisted on residence for bishops and even deprived some of the cardinals of offices whose duties they were not carrying out.

His successor, a Franciscan who took the name Sixtus V (1585-90), is one of the most vigorous popes of the Catholic Reformation; but stern and bellicose in the line of Paul IV and Pius V. His methods were drastic and harsh and not always effective. He succeeded in putting down the disturbances of the nobles, whose unruly behavior had long been a curse of the Papal States, and restoring order in the Campagna. Adultery, prostitution, theft, and even small moral faults were prosecuted so vigorously that objections were heard in Rome and the pope was bitterly attacked in lampoons.

Sixtus was, however, a great administrator. Under him, the dome of St. Peter's, designed by Michelangelo, was finally completed. Because of his efforts, a new edition of the Vulgate based on the Septuagint was brought out. The work was completed hastily and required corrections under the next pope, but with these changes it became the basis for all subsequent editions.

His greatest accomplishment lay in the reorganization of papal administration. In 1586 he fixed the number of cardinals at seventy. In 1588 he revised the entire structure of the Curia by establishing the system of permanent congregations, each one charged with a branch of the work of the church. The idea was not wholly new, but Sixtus developed and systematized it and made it the basis of the entire mechanism of the church. Among these bodies were the Congregation of the Holy Office or Inquisition; the Congregation of the Council, charged with carrying out the decrees of Trent; and the Congregation of the Index, which was to supervise the list of prohibited books.

By the start of the seventeenth century, the Catholic Reformation was reaching its full

development. The papacy, in the hands of able and determined men, was in full charge of the movement; the church, with its moral authority and spiritual prestige restored, proved to have weathered the crises of the Renaissance and Reformation. The seventeenth century was to witness further triumphs, and the future was to show that the chief problems the church would face would not come from Protestantism, but from the forces that have so largely characterized the modern world: religious indifference and skepticism, science, the growth of materialism, and the pursuit by men of ends that were primarily secular and material.

THE ROMAN INQUISITION

The Catholic Reformation aimed not only at spreading the faith through reform of the church and through preaching and teaching; in another of its aspects, it also sought to suppress heresy. The chief institution directed to this purpose was the Holy Office of the Roman Inquisition. It was not altogether new; in the Middle Ages, there had been papal and episcopal inquisitions established for the task of searching out heretics and bringing them to trial. By the fifteenth century, however, the activity of these bodies had lessened. In Italy, the power of the papal Inquisition had declined, together with its organization. In 1478, however, Ferdinand and Isabella had revived the Inquisition in the Spanish kingdoms, and it operated very effectively. Cardinal Caraffa (later Paul IV), who had observed it in operation, was impressed by it and wanted a papal Inquisition of the same sort a permanent, centralized tribunal with universal jurisdiction and power over all persons, even the most highly placed, who might be suspected of heresy.

It was Caraffa who was chiefly instrumental in persuading Paul III in 1542 to reestablish the Roman Inquisition. It had six Inquisitors-General, with great powers. They were independent of the bishops in their jurisdiction, could degrade priests from their offices, could exercise censure, call in the aid of the secular arm, and delegate powers. While they could punish, only the pope could pardon. Caraffa himself was president of the tribunal, a fact that prevented any serious deviation into leniency. The Dominicans, long associated with the suppression of heresy, were put in charge of the courts of the Inquisition.

As a matter of fact, however, although the records of the Holy Office have never been made available, it appears to have proceeded with more restraint than might be inferred. Torture seems to have been used rarely, special consideration was given to the sick, and the judges were merciful. Caraffa was inflexible, however, in his insistence that no mercy be shown to the great. This is clear from the four rules of procedure that he established: 1) punish on suspicion; 2) have no regard for the great; 3) punish most severely those who take shelter behind the powerful; 4) show no mildness, least of all toward Calvinists.

At first the establishment of the Inquisition in the Italian cities was slower than Caraffa had hoped. The Italians did not show any natural disposition toward the burning of

heretics, and some of the cities resisted the foundation of the new tribunal. When Caraffa became Pope Paul IV in 1555, he had his opportunity to give the Inquisition the scope and effectiveness that he desired. Even as pope, his interest in the work of the Holy Office was enormous. It was said by the Venetian ambassador at Rome that nothing on earth could prevent him from attending its meetings. Michele Ghislieri (later Pius V), a man after the pope's own heart, was put at the head of it, and Paul greatly increased its authority and powers. He was able to make it effective in the Italian cities that had harbored unorthodox views, especially Venice.

The states of Europe were asked to facilitate the work of the Inquisition. In France, the request was denied. In Spain, however, the activities of the Inquisition, long vigorous, were stimulated even further. Persecution reached a new peak; even St. Teresa came under suspicion, and the archbishop of Toledo was arrested. When Paul IV, long an enemy of the Hapsburgs, finally made peace with Philip II, the result was to strengthen the Spanish domination in Milan and Naples and, in turn, to provide the Inquisition with Spanish support and enable it to oppose the resistance of the Italian states. Thus the increasing Spanish domination helped in the repression of heresy and free thought in Italy.

Even after the death of Paul IV in 1559, the repression of heresy in Italy continued. The French duchess of Ferrara, Rene, daughter of Louis XII, was forced by the Inquisition to leave Ferrara, where she had long been hospitable to advanced opinions in religion. In 1562, in Calabria, two thousand Waldensian heretics were massacred. With the coming of the implacable Ghislieri to the papal throne as Pius V in 1566, the Inquisition he had headed became particularly active. Burnings became common in Rome, and cardinals and ambassadors were compelled to attend. Throughout Italy the same policy of repression was carried out.

THE INDEX

Another means of suppressing heretical doctrines was found in the Roman Index of Prohibited Books, a list of works considered dangerous to the faith, which Catholics were, therefore, forbidden to read. Even before this list was officially drawn up, there had been cases of censorship of the reading matter of the faithful, particularly since the invention of printing in the fifteenth century. Popes, councils, and secular rulers both Catholic and Protestant all engaged in censorship. In 1501 Pope Alexander VI made archbishops official censors for their provinces. Paul III also undertook to prevent the dissemination of pernicious books, and imposed severe punishments on those who sold them.

The Roman Inquisition was active in censoring books, and Cardinal Caraffa, after becoming Pope Paul IV, published the Roman Index of Prohibited Books in 1559 and established a special congregation to look after censorship. Three classes of authors and books were placed on the Index: 1) authors who had erred *ex professo*. All their works

were forbidden, even those that contained nothing against the faith; 2) authors of whom only some works were condemned. In this category was placed the 1537 report of Paul III's reform commission, of which the present pope had been a member; 3) books with some harmful doctrines, mostly by anonymous heretics. In this third group were also books that lacked the name of the author, or the date and place of publication, or had been printed without ecclesiastical permission. All translations of the New Testament in the vernacular were forbidden, and sixty-one printers were named, all of whose works were prohibited. Erasmus was placed in the first category, and all of his writings were condemned.

Paul's successor, Pius IV, revised the Index and relaxed the harshness that had appeared excessive to some Catholics. For example, the blanket condemnation of Erasmus was lifted, and only some of his works were prohibited. The Council of Trent, which had shown an interest in censorship since its earliest sessions, drew up its own list of forbidden books. This list, the Tridentine Index, was published in 1564. Erasmus was put in the second class. On the other hand, a wide variety of books was now condemned, including not only heretical ones but also obscene books books on witchcraft, and so forth. Pius V appointed a Congregation of the Index, to keep the Index up to date and to publish revised editions periodically.

RELIGIOUS REVIVAL

More than repression was needed to revitalize the church, however; and there was a genuine revival of Catholic piety led by a number of men and women of outstanding devotion and sanctity. Charles Borromeo, after the death of his uncle Pope Pius IV, returned to Milan where he was archbishop. Pius IV had made him cardinal and papal secretary of state. He was in Milan from 1565 until his death in 1584 carrying out the Tridentine reforms and raising the standards of the clergy. The administration of the province was reformed to bring about closer supervision of the priests. Seminaries were founded. Provincial councils were regularly held. Discipline was restored both among secular priests and in the religious orders. He gave his property to the poor, and founded schools and hospitals for their benefit. During time of plague he visited the sick and brought them the consolations of the church.

In Spain, two outstanding saints of the period were Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. St. Teresa, a member of Spanish nobility, had become a Carmelite as a young girl. The Carmelite order, which attracted women from highly placed families, was living under a somewhat relaxed rule, and its members were on the whole rather worldly. Teresa, after undergoing severe religious crises and unusual mystical experiences, felt led in 1562 to found in Avila a convent that should return to the original strict rule of the order. In addition to being a devout mystic, she proved to have great practical talent as an organizer and enormous energy, which enabled her to found numerous other reformed convents of her order.

St. John of the Cross, a member of the male branch of the Carmelites was an ascetic who also longed for a return to strict obedience to the primitive rules of the order. He collaborated with Teresa by bringing the Carmelite reform to men, as she was doing for women. Like her, he was a mystic. Both of them met with opposition, and John was subjected to suffering and indignity. Eventually, after they had both died, the reformed Carmelites received permanent recognition from the popes. The influence of their reform spread far and wide and persists today among the members of their order.

A contemporary of these saints, who worked in Rome, was St. Philip Neri (1515-95). He too was a mystic, a man noted for his humor and his informal approach, who worked in the streets of Rome, preaching even when he was still a layman to all sorts of people, and attempting to bring about a moral regeneration. He eventually did become a priest. He is most famous for the order he founded, known as the Oratory (to be distinguished from the Oratory of Divine Love). It was different from other orders in the church because it combined priests and laymen in a very loose organization with a very simple rule. Its chief bond, according to the founder, was love and affection. It accomplished much and was widely imitated.

Thus throughout Catholic Europe, inspired by such leaders as these, there was a renewal and revival of Christian feeling. In France, such individuals as St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622) did great work. The seventeenth century was to see a continuation of the Catholic reform. To what extent was this revival a result of the Protestant Reformation? It is impossible to determine. But it may be said that the conflicts and crises of Christendom in the sixteenth century were not in vain. There was a revival of faith in Europe. The churches were to find that their mutual antagonisms were perhaps less dangerous to their well-being than forces outside them altogether. More subtle enemies lay in wait, and to this day have not been successfully met.



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CHAPTER 20

LITERARY MOVEMENTS IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

FRANCE AND ENGLAND

In the literature of northern Europe, the sixteenth century marks the flowering of the Renaissance. In some countries, such as England, the literary Renaissance continued well into the following century. This chapter will deal with some of the important currents and authors in French and English literature of the sixteenth century.

FRANCE

In the reign of Francis I (1515-47), it was already said in France that letters were being reborn. Many poets and scholars welcomed the great cultural change they saw taking place. They spoke of a return of the Golden Age and of the coming of the light and the banishing of Gothic darkness; letters had returned from exile and had been restored to possession of their rights. This restoration referred to the cultivation of the literature of classical antiquity, which was the chief influence on French literature in the sixteenth century. In this pursuit of the antique, the French were following the lead of Italy, and the Italian influence took its place alongside that of the ancients.

The French Renaissance felt strongly the effect of Plato and Petrarch. The Platonic influence is most readily apparent in the exalted conception of love, stemming from Ficino's circle, that can be found in much of the French prose and poetry of the period. It was the theme that we have encountered in Castiglione and Michelangelo a love for ideal beauty, above the deceptions of the senses and leading to the love of God. Petrarch's impact on French literature is shown in the adoption of the sonnet form, introduced into French by Clément Marot, and in the type of love poetry that was written, in which the Italian poet's celebration of Laura served as a model for numerous other poetic lovers.

The Italian and Platonic influences first made themselves felt in the city of Lyon, whose most famous poet was Maurice Scève (died c.1563). Humanist and jurist, he became well known for his supposed and erroneous discovery in Avignon in 1533 of the tomb of

Laura. His poems, inspired by both Petrarchism and Platonism, had also an element of numeric symbolism reminiscent of both antiquity and the Middle Ages. Yet he is more than an imitator; his poetry speaks out of a depth of experience and feeling, and his technical skill is considerable.

One of the most interesting writers of the reign of Francis I was Marguerite d'Angoulme, or Marguerite of Navarre (1492-1549), Francis's older sister and by her second marriage queen of Navarre. The future king Henry IV (Henry of Navarre) was her grandson. She and her brother were deeply devoted to each other. At times in Francis's reign, his sister was called on to take an active part in state affairs and diplomatic negotiations. As queen of Navarre, she was required at times to govern that country during her husband's absences.

We have already seen something of her importance in the current of religious reform that preceded the Reformation in France. She was also a patron of literature. Marot was a protégé of hers; and Rabelais, at the beginning of the third book of his great work, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, addresses an appreciative poem to her spirit. She was herself a writer of importance, chiefly because of her *Heptameron*.

This collection of stories, which she worked on from 1542 to the end of her life, was modeled on the *Decameron* of Boccaccio. Her plan was apparently to write one hundred stories. Between seventy and eighty are known to exist today, either because she did not finish the book or because some of the stories have been lost. (The present title of the book was not given to it by the author.) One constant theme of the stories is the contrast between true and false religion. The false kind is represented particularly by the Franciscans, or Cordeliers, who appear frequently and who are normally treacherous, wicked, hypocritical, and lascivious. In one story, they are referred to as "these fine fathers who preach chastity to us and then want to take it away from our wives!" The secular clergy are not spared, however; the first story of the entire collection, apparently based like many of the others on an actual incident, concerns a bishop who pursues a married woman.

True religion, on the other hand, involves devotion to the reading of the Bible, where one finds "the true and perfect joy of the spirit, from which proceeds the repose and health of the body." Scriptural religion is a religion of faith, of the spirit, and of love, and is opposed to "superstition" and sham piety. In short, Marguerite's religious ideal is Erasmian.

The most pervasive theme is love, love in all its varieties carnal and Platonic, connubial and extramarital, licit and illicit. Marguerite's own opinion may appear in a statement made after the nineteenth story by a member of the storytelling company who represents Marguerite herself. It is her opinion that "no man will ever love God perfectly unless he

has loved perfectly some creature in this world." Perfect lovers are "those who seek, in what they love, some perfection, whether beauty, goodness, or grace, always tending towards virtue." She goes on in this passage to celebrate, in the Platonic manner familiar in Renaissance literature, the soul's search, starting with the objects of the senses, for a perfection beyond the senses, a perfection that can be found only in the divine.

Marguerite's admirer, Francois Rabelais (c.1494 1553), was the greatest French prose writer of the first half of the sixteenth century. From 1532 to 1552, he brought out the four books of his great work, the fabulous history of Gargantua and Pantagruel. A fifth book, published after his death, may or may not have been written by him.

In his restless and varied career, Rabelais was a priest and a friar, a physician, and the father of at least three illegitimate children by at least two mothers. He became interested at an early date in humanistic studies, and was a devoted follower of the ideas of Erasmus.

The four books of Gargantua and Pantagruel are a comic narrative in which the chief characters are Gargantua and Pantagruel, respectively father and son, who are kings and giants. Few stories have ever been told with such gusto and good humor. The size of the giants gives opportunities for humor based on wild exaggeration as when Pantagruel, leading an army in defense of his homeland (which is named Utopia), shields his troops from a heavy rain by sticking out his tongue and covering them with it. This same sort of exuberance shows itself in Rabelais's long lists of books, plants, animals, and games.

In spite of its humor, which never flags, it is a serious book. The author presents his ideas on education, which mark him as a firm adherent of the Renaissance outlook on the subject. He believes in experience, relies on the classical authors, and with rollicking satire, mocks and rejects scholastic methods and the content of scholastic education. Gargantua, for example, starts his education under the supervision of a learned scholastic doctor, who teaches him the alphabet so thoroughly that he can say it backwards by heart. This takes five years and three months. After more of this, the boy's father switches to another teacher, who leads his pupil in a curriculum that would have satisfied the Italian humanistic teachers and writers on education. It is even more broad, however, including the study of nature to a greater extent, for instance, and observing the practitioners of numerous trades and professions.

Rabelais also expounds his ideas on religion, where the influence of Erasmus is most noticeable. He is opposed to formalism and excessive ceremony, and heaps scorn on ignorant, lazy, and useless monks. He is likewise opposed to superstitious beliefs and practices, and regards pilgrimages as useless. Popes and the canon law are the objects of sharp comments. True religion, on the other hand, is based on the Gospel, trusts in God, and dedicates itself to His service.

Toward the end of Book One, Gargantua builds an abbey, which is named Thlme, from the Greek for free will. The only rule of the house is "Do what you will." It is open to both men and women, who live entirely as they wish and are free to leave at any time. This freedom is possible "because people who are free, well-bred, and easy in honest company have a natural spur and instinct which drives them to virtuous deeds and deflects them from vice; and this they called honour."

In short, Rabelais is not an atheist or a Protestant. He is an Erasmian humanist and a Christian. He is also a scholar with a great zest for learning, which matches his zest for life and experience.

John Calvin also has an important place in the development of French prose. The first French edition of the Institutes of the Christian Religion, published in 1541, is the earliest work in the language in the field of theology, for which Latin had been considered the appropriate medium; Calvin had originally published the Institutes in Latin. His French translation, therefore, was written not for professional theologians but for laymen; and his aim was, as he put it, to teach in the simplest possible form. He was remarkably successful, achieving a simplicity and clarity that are especially noteworthy in a subject that lends itself to obscurity. Calvin took particular satisfaction in the brevity and precision of his style. At the same time, he achieved a distinctive pithy flavor, which does not always come through in English translation, and he enhanced this quality by the use of popular and idiomatic expressions. His writing has force and movement, sometimes humor, and sometimes eloquence and grandeur. He is one of the greatest French stylists of the century.

An important French poet, whose path crossed that of Calvin, was Clment Marot (1496 1544). He was a member of the circle of Marguerite of Navarre and absorbed the liberal sentiments of that environment. He even approached Protestantism, though he cannot be said to have become a Protestant. At least, if he did, it was not for long. He spent much of his life in court circles in the service of the French crown and of Marguerite. He was fortunate in finding in Marguerite a friend and protector, since he had a knack for getting into trouble with the church and the law and needed her help in extricating himself. For example, he was more than once imprisoned for eating meat during Lent. In 1535 he lived for a while at the court of Ferrara, which its duchess, Rene of France, had made a refuge for holders of advanced religious views; Calvin himself was there at the time of Marot's sojourn. One of the poems that Marot later addressed to Rene was probably the first sonnet written in French.

Marot wrote in a number of forms. Translation from Virgil shows the influence of humanism. He was a master of satire, as shown in his answer to an attack by a mediocre poet named Sagon. His wit is revealed in his poetic letters to King Francis I begging for pardon or money. His French translations of some of the Psalms were very skillful and were adopted for use in church by many Protestant congregations. In fact, Calvin himself

encouraged the work.

Calvin's encouragement came at a time when Marot was in Geneva, where he took refuge in 1542, having once more been forced to flee France because of his outspokenness on matters of church and state. In 1544 he fled from Geneva. He never returned to France, dying at Turin.

Marot was a poet of transition; his early work was in the medieval manner, and something of the Middle Ages always remained in his work. Later he came under the influence of the Renaissance, and by 1525 he was celebrating the rebirth of letters, formerly withered by "the cold wind of Ignorance." Francis I, he said, had made arts and letters shine more brightly than in the days of the Caesars. He became an adherent of humanism, reading the works of the Latin poets, departing more and more from the traditional poetic forms, and adapting his style to the new influences. These included not only the classics but also the modern Italian writers, particularly Petrarch.

He was for some time the French court poet, and much of his work consequently is of an official character. He was very adept at writing light and witty verses about small happenings at court, but his best work is of a more personal character. This is shown in his epistles, his best and most famous poems. In these he covered a wide range of subjects. Some of them, such as his letters to the king, which have already been mentioned, are masterpieces. Marot stands as the first of modern French poets.

The new age in French poetry was even more clearly announced in 1549, by the *Defense and Illustration of the French Language*, written by Joachim du Bellay (1522-60). This manifesto was originally the preface to the first published collection of Du Bellay's poems. The ideas contained in it were not his alone, but those of a group of young students and poets from one of the Paris colleges, led by Pierre de Ronsard. The purpose of the book, like that of Dante's *De vulgari eloquentia*, is to prove that the vernacular is suited, as Du Bellay puts it, for "all good letters and learning." The French, he asserts patriotically, are in no way inferior to the Greeks and Romans. He thanks the late king, Francis I, who has restored "all the good arts and sciences in their ancient dignity" in France. Because the French language has been neglected, he admits, it still suffers from poverty and needs to be enriched. For this purpose, French writers should imitate the best Greek and Roman authors. He also recommends that French poets should learn from Italians, Spaniards, and others. He urges Frenchmen to write in their mother tongue, to march against the Greeks and Romans and despoil them.

The group of young poets whose ideas found expression in Du Bellay's manifesto were known at first as the *Brigade* and later by the more famous name of the *Pliade*. They introduced a new poetry into France. Du Bellay was himself a member of the group and an important poet in his own right. He belonged to one of the most distinguished families

in France. In his tragically short life he was distracted from his writing by poor health, family problems, and duties that were often tedious and always unrelated to poetry; yet he managed to write the works that have made him one of the great French poets. In about 1547, he met Ronsard, and this momentous meeting brought together the two future leaders of the Pliade.

Du Bellay acknowledged without jealousy that the first place among contemporary French poets belonged to Ronsard, but he himself ranked second. He published the first substantial French sonnet collection, named *Olive* for the lady to whom the sonnets are addressed. Petrarchan influences are prominent in these poems. Other works show the effect of his reading of Horace. Some of his themes, in addition to love, are the fragility of worldly things, the inconstancy of fortune, and the fleeting character of man and of earthly existence. In his later poetry there is a Platonic note and a turning to religious subjects, together with a renunciation of his earlier Petrarchan manner.

He spent several years in Rome, and what he saw there inspired him to write poems celebrating the grandeur of the city and lamenting its decay. Beholding the ruins of what was once greatest in the world, the poet philosophizes on the themes of greatness and decline, and concludes that everything accomplished by man rises and falls, defeated by time. But from the ruins rises a new and regenerated life. Other poems from his Roman sojourn attack the abuses and immorality he saw there, the corruption of the papal court as well as the crowds of courtesans, which afflicted the city. In some of these poems he shows himself to be one of the great satirists.

In his last years, after his return to France, he wrote patriotic poetry, no doubt sincere but also prompted by his desire to become the official poet of the king. He died at the height of his powers, and his influence on later poets was profound. He even had an effect on English poetry and received a handsome tribute from Edmund Spenser.

The greatest French lyric poet of the Renaissance was Pierre de Ronsard (1524-85). He hoped originally for a career in military and diplomatic service, but an illness of 1540, which left him partially deaf, put an end to his youthful hopes. He turned, therefore, to a career in the church and to the writing of poetry. Though he never became a priest, he did receive the tonsure and was eligible to hold benefices. His education included study of Greek and Latin in Paris under Jean Dorat, an accomplished classical scholar who was also the teacher of Du Bellay and other members of the Pliade. Through the favor of the royal court, Ronsard held church livings, which served to support him. His standing was especially high with King Charles IX, who once honored the poet by paying him a visit. After the death of Charles, Ronsard lost much of his prestige at court to a younger poet, Desportes. During the Wars of Religion, he wrote against the Huguenots, and in doing so became the founder in France of political poetic satire.

Ronsard's work is the supreme example of the Renaissance spirit in French poetry. Rejecting with scorn all previous poetry in his native tongue, he turned to the ancients for his inspiration. His first poems were in Latin, but he soon turned to French and took up the challenge of learning the lessons of the classical poets and then rivaling them in French. They taught him not only form; something of their spirit entered his poetry. He always had a deep feeling for nature; the forests and streams for him were full of nymphs and dryads and satyrs. He frankly accepted and loved earthly beauties and pleasures; there is a large group of women whom he loved and immortalized by his poetry. He regarded the office of poet as a holy priesthood, and strove for imperishable fame. To the end there is something pagan in his poetry, although in his own way he was a sincere Christian. Certainly his sensual nature helps to explain his antagonism for the austerities of Geneva.

Like Du Bellay, he was affected by Petrarch for a while, and with this influence came Platonic elements: the love of heavenly beauty as contrasted with the sensual, for example. This Platonism does not consort very well with Ronsard's earthy nature: With him, as with Du Bellay, the Petrarchan phase was only temporary.

Ronsard achieved grandeur and sublimity, but also simplicity and directness. He has been called the creator of modern French poetic language. Not until the nineteenth century did France produce lyric poetry to compare with his.

We may close our brief discussion of French literature of the Renaissance with Michel de Montaigne (1533-92). He came from a family that had prospered in trade and had, thereby, been able to gain a place among the nobility. The castle of Montaigne, where he was born, is in the region of Bordeaux, where members of the family had been prominent in government and in the church. His mother was descended from the Marranos, the converted Jews of Spain. Among her relatives there were some who died at the hands of the Inquisition, and it has been suggested that this heritage may have had something to do with Montaigne's tolerance and hatred of torture.

His education was humanistic, and he may also have studied law, because from 1557 to 1570 he was a member of the Parlement of Bordeaux. During these years he also spent much time at the royal court. At the parlement he met Etienne de La Botie, who became his closest friend, and whose early death in 1563 at the age of thirty-two left him desolate. Montaigne's marriage in 1565 does not seem to have involved deep affection; marriage he called "a bargain to which only the entrance is free." Of the six children of this marriage all girls only one survived.

In 1570 he resigned his post in the parlement and retired to the castle of Montaigne to spend the rest of his days in "freedom, tranquillity, and leisure." To this decision we owe the *Essays*. He did not, however, find complete quiet. The religious wars invaded his retreat, and even endangered his life. Furthermore, his activity in the world of affairs was

by no means over. Because he was trusted by both sides in the civil strife, he appears to have been employed as a go-between, though his activities remain mysterious. In 1573 he was made gentleman-in-ordinary of the king's chamber, and must have spent some time at court. In 1580-81, he made a trip of seventeen months to several countries; his *Travel Journal* from this trip survives.

His travels were cut short by the news, which he received in September 1581, that he had been elected mayor of Bordeaux. He was reelected at the end of his two-year term and served another two years. His job was not an easy one. He had to keep Bordeaux loyal to the king, although in the city there were extreme Catholics, opponents of the royal policy, while around Bordeaux were sites held by the Huguenots. Nevertheless, he seems to have succeeded in this task, and to have kept the esteem of the Protestant leader, Henry of Navarre, who was his guest for two days in December 1584.

Even after this he was involved in matters of state, in which his moderation exposed him to serious risks from extremists on both sides. He was robbed at one time, imprisoned at another, his home was pillaged, and he ran some risk of losing his life on a couple of occasions. When Henry III was murdered in 1589, Henry of Navarre, the new monarch, wanted Montaigne to join him. His ill health prevented this, and in 1592 Montaigne died in the castle where he was born.

His life's work is his *Essays*, which he worked on from the time of his retirement in 1570 to the end of his life. To read the three books of the *Essays* from the beginning is to become aware that there was a development in his thought. For one thing, it took a while for Montaigne to become aware of what his subject was. The earliest essays tend to be impersonal and to consist largely of quotations from classical writers. As time went on, he found himself as a writer by finding himself as his subject. By the time he published the first edition in 1580 he could say, in his *Address to the Reader*, "Thus, reader, I am myself the matter of my book." The uniqueness and attraction of the *Essays* arise largely from the fact that in them, perhaps for the first time, a man has attempted to set forth a complete self-portrait.

The great size and endless fascination of the book show what an inexhaustible subject a man is, and how the exploration of one individual's character, thoughts, and feelings can disclose whole continents and oceans, as interesting and instructive in their own way as the new lands and seas that were being opened up by the navigators of Montaigne's century. To be sure, the subject of Montaigne's explorings was a quite remarkable man, with a gift for striking and pithy expression of his thoughts.

He undertook to examine himself not out of vanity but because he was interested in man in general, and found that the best way to investigate man was to study the one man whom he knew best. "Each man," he declared (III, 2), "bears the entire form of man's estate." He

is, as he points out in the same passage, a moral philosopher.

In an age of dogmatists, fanatics, and bigots, Montaigne was a skeptic. He confessed that he was sure of very little. His *Essays* (he invented the term) were, as the word implies, attempts attempts to find out what was going on in his own mind and to formulate his views; one of his mottoes was, "What do I know?" His skepticism helped to make him tolerant: "After all, it is putting a very high price on one's conjectures to have a man roasted because of them." (III, 11) He distrusts the powers of the human mind; it is too easily misled by custom, for instance. Even our religion is a matter of where we happen to have been born. Our imagination too affects our judgment; miracles and the like arise from it. Reason is especially unreliable in matters of religion. In general then, men know little; their ignorance far outweighs their knowledge.

But his generally low opinion of man and his powers, so contrary to the humanistic insistence on the dignity of man, was not merely negative in its implications. Not only did it help to make him tolerant, as we have seen, in matters of religion, but it also caused him to decry two of the most cruel and irrational practices of his age: the use of torture in criminal prosecutions and the trial and punishment of witches. Of torture, he says, "What would a man not say, what would a man not do, to escape such grievous pains?" (II, 5) As for the fantastic stories told about the behavior of witches, he says, "Truly, I would not believe my own self about this." (III, 11)

With all his skepticism and independence of thought, he considered himself to be, and no doubt was, a sincere Catholic, though his faith was hardly that of a St. Teresa of Avila, filled with mystic raptures and visions. Montaigne accepted the Roman church because it was based on long tradition and stood for stability and order, and he condemned the Huguenots, whom he blamed for the disorder and destruction that France was suffering in his time. He believed in the customary and settled ways of doing things, and he deplored innovation and its unsettling effects.

Yet he found much to criticize in his own society: the laws, medicine, education, for example. The *Essays* have much to say about education. Learning of itself has little value; it is wisdom and virtue that matter. "Even if we could be learned with other men's learning, at least wise we cannot be except by our own wisdom." (I, 25) But with all his doubt and disenchantment, he concludes his lifework in a mood of mellow acceptance. The important thing is to live well, and just to have lived is a great deal. "We are great fools. 'He has spent his life in idleness,' we say; 'I have done nothing today.' What, have you not lived? That is not only the fundamental but the most illustrious of your occupations." (III, 13) And so, though he refuses to glorify man, though he looks at things straight and sees them clearly, he is still a humanist and one of the most attractively human of them all.

ENGLAND

In English literary history the Renaissance extends from the sixteenth century into the late seventeenth; John Milton (1608-74) is considered a Renaissance writer. Thus much of the English literary Renaissance must remain outside the scope of this book. We will discuss some of the chief aspects of English Renaissance literature to about the time of the death of William Shakespeare in 1616.

In the literature of sixteenth-century England there existed, together with new currents, many traditional elements. Thus in a period we are apt to think of as witnessing profound changes, writers continued to assume, and expect their readers to assume, certain views about the nature of things that had been accepted for centuries past.

This picture of the world, or the universe, was geocentric and anthropocentric. It derived ultimately from the works of Aristotle and Ptolemy, whose ideas had been given a Christian interpretation. Dante's *Divine Comedy* illustrates the completed form of this interpretation as it appeared in medieval thought. The earth was fixed in the center of the physical universe, with the planets, including sun and moon, revolving around it in circular orbits. The planets were perfect bodies; the circle was a perfect form. Each of the planets was encased in a solid crystalline sphere. Beyond the spheres of the planets was the sphere of the fixed stars. Beyond this sphere was the sphere of the *Primum Mobile*, which imparted motion to all the other spheres, and outside all these spheres was God, the Unmoved Mover, who was everywhere.

The earth was composed of the four elements: earth, water, air, fire. These had their order of value: earth the lowest, then water, air, and finally fire, the highest in rank. To these elements corresponded the four humors which composed man's body: melancholy or black bile, cold and dry like earth; phlegm, cold and moist like water; blood, hot and moist like air; and choler or bile, hot and dry like fire. A person's complexion or temperament was based on the relationship of the humors to one another. Thus one could be melancholy, phlegmatic, sanguine, or choleric (bilious) depending on which of the humors predominated. As Tillyard points out, the words of Antony about Brutus at the end of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* show that the human ideal was a man in whom the humors (Shakespeare uses "elements" here) were in perfect balance:

"His life was gentle, and the elements / So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up / And say to all the world, 'This was a man!'" (act 5, scene 5) If the balance of the humors was too seriously disturbed, disorder and disease resulted; this explains the frequent practice of trying to cure sickness by bleeding the patient.

Earthly things and human bodies, composed of these imperfect elements and humors, could suffer from excess or deficiency, imbalance and disorder; not so the heavenly

spheres. They were composed of ether, a perfect and imperishable element, the fifth element or quintessence. Everything beneath the moon that is, the sublunary realm was made up of the perishable and imperfect; the moon and all that was beyond it constituted the realm of the perfect and unchanging.

Yet there was a connection between the perfect and imperishable heavens and the corruptible and transitory beings who inhabited the earth, and this connection provided the basis of astrology. The heavens had a direct influence on human life, and an individual's nature reflected the planetary sign under which he was born. Those born under the influence of Saturn were saturnine, inclined to melancholy and they were "contemplative, meditating, brooding, solitary, creative." In the Renaissance artists were supposed to be of this character. The characteristic qualities of every realm of being, from the intelligence of the angels to the matter of inanimate objects, and by virtue of this, he became the bond that joined the universe together. All these views helped mold the thinking of English writers in the sixteenth century.

In England as in France, the literature of the Renaissance showed the influence both of classical antiquity and of the modern Italian writers. These influences helped to revive English writing, which in the fifteenth century had suffered a decline, along with scholarship and intellectual life in general. These influences can be seen in the work of two poets who helped introduce the new age Wyatt and Surrey. Both of these men came from the classes that ruled England, and their lives were largely spent in government service. They illustrate the great importance of the court in the culture of the period. It was the chief center and stimulus of literature. One of the avocations of courtiers was the writing of verse, which, as amateurs, they often disdained to publish, so that their views circulated in manuscript only. Both Wyatt and Surrey led rather turbulent lives. Both spent time in prison, and both died young. Surrey in fact was executed by Henry VIII, of whom he had at one time been a favorite. Wyatt survived imprisonment, but his son was executed in the reign of Queen Mary for leading an unsuccessful rebellion.

The poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-42) are firmly rooted in English tradition and at the same time exhibit the influence of Italy, which Wyatt visited in 1527 at a time when Petrarch's work was enjoying a revival of interest. The effects can be seen in his translations from Petrarch and in his use of the sonnet form, which he seems to have introduced into English. He used the tight Petrarchan rhyme scheme for his sonnets, which are often fairly uninspired. However, in some of his poetry he shows a genuine lyric gift. He writes much about love in the Petrarchan tradition, with the cruel unfeeling lady unmoved by her lover's devotion and suffering.

The following stanzas, the first and last of one of his poems (there are six stanzas in between) illustrate the grace and simplicity of which he was often capable:

LXVI

My lute awake! perform the last
 Labour that thou and I shall waste,
 And end that I have now begun;
 For when this song is sung and past,
 My lute be still, for I have done

.....

Now cease, my lute: this is the last
 Labour that thou and I shall waste,
 And ended is that we begun.
 Now is this song both sung and past:
 My lute be still, for I have done.

The references to his lute and to "this song" may serve to remind us that the lyric poetry of this period was meant to be sung, and that such poems were provided with musical settings; sometimes poets were also composers and wrote the music for their own poetry.

Henry Howard, earl of Surrey (1517-47), was the son of the duke of Norfolk, the greatest of the English nobles. He was related to both of the wives whom Henry VIII beheaded, Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard. He was a close friend of the duke of Richmond, the king's illegitimate son, and a bitter enemy of the Seymours, the relatives of Henry's third wife. The experiences of Anne and Catherine did not teach him prudence, which in someone so highly placed was an indispensable requirement for survival in Henry's reign. His arrogance and reckless pride cost him his life in the last days of Henry's reign.

Surrey shows both the classical and Italian influences in his translation of two books of Virgil's *Aeneid*. For his translation he used the meter that became known as blank verse: unrhymed iambic pentameter, each line containing ten syllables with the stress on the even numbered syllables. He derived this form from the Italian. The opening of his translation of Book II will illustrate his use of this form: "They whisted all, with fixed face
 attent, / When prince Aeneas from the royal seat / Thus gan to speak...." This meter became the one used in the drama by Shakespeare and others, and by Milton in his great epics *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*.

In his sonnets Surrey used a looser rhyme scheme than the Petrarchan, with three quatrains using alternating rhymes and a rhyming couplet at the end. This was the form that was to be used by Shakespeare. Like Wyatt, Surrey is most important for his short lyric poems with their expression of personal feeling.

Turning from poetry to prose, we find a great body of work connected with the religious developments of the time. While much of the literature was still written in Latin, which had for centuries been the language of theology; there was now a great deal of work in English, both in the form of original writings and in translations. Religious controversy was sometimes carried on in English, and the writings of William Tyndale and Thomas More against one another's positions illustrate this. But the most important and enduring contributions to English prose during the years preceding the accession of Elizabeth and perhaps of the entire century are to be found in the area of Biblical translation and devotional literature.

William Tyndale (c.1490 1536), one of the earliest English Protestants, left England for the Continent to undertake a translation of the Bible, subsidized by sympathetic Englishmen. He translated the entire New Testament and some books of the Old before being taken and burned at the stake in the Low Countries in 1536. His translation was completed by Miles Coverdale (1488 1568). Coverdale was not so good a scholar as Tyndale; whereas Tyndale had based his translation on the original languages, Hebrew and Greek, Coverdale used the Latin Vulgate and Luther's German version. However, both translators had great gifts of language, and their work became the basis for later Protestant versions of Scripture, including the King James Bible (1611). Thus the simplicity, dignity, grandeur, and beauty of the most important of all books in English owes much to these two early Protestant translators.

Next to their work, the most significant prose achievement of the period was the Book of Common Prayer, of which the chief author was Thomas Cranmer. This book may in a sense also be classed with the translations because it was largely adapted from Latin service books already in use; nevertheless, it is a masterpiece of English prose. The stateliness of its rhythms and its dignity and nobility of phrase were especially important in the life of a newly founded church, which for many years had to struggle for acceptance and find a place in the minds and hearts of the English people.

The culmination of sixteenth-century literature in England came in the reign of Elizabeth I; the Elizabethan Age is one of the glories of English literature. Out of the great number of important writers of the period we shall turn our attention chiefly to four of the most outstanding, who are distinguished not only for their high level of achievement but also for the wide range of literary forms in which they exercised their talents. These writers are Sidney, Spenser, Marlowe, and Shakespeare.

Sir Philip Sidney (1554 86) came from a distinguished family devoted to public service, and he spent his tragically short life in court and government circles. He traveled widely on the Continent, and died in the Netherlands fighting for Dutch independence. He was a nephew of the earl of Leicester, and his sister Mary became countess of Pembroke. He was interested in classical and humanistic learning and also in politics and public affairs. His writings cover a variety of fields: literary criticism, pastoral romance, and a sonnet

sequence, among other things. Most of his works were not published during his lifetime.

His sonnet sequence is entitled *Astrophel and Stella*. It is a large work, with 108 sonnets, and eleven songs interspersed among them. Like Petrarch's poems to Laura, they examine the various aspects of love. At their best, they are outstanding in clarity, passion, and grace.

Sidney's pastoral romance, the *Arcadia*, was written for his sister, the countess of Pembroke. The pastoral tradition, evoking the supposedly simple and blissful country life of nymphs and shepherds, goes back to Greece and Rome. It had been revived in Renaissance Italy by such authors as Boccaccio and Jacopo Sannazaro (1456-1530), whose *Arcadia* consisted of both prose and verse. Sannazaro's work was a great influence on Sidney.

Sidney's *Arcadia* has a very complicated pattern, containing a large number of interwoven stories. According to C. S. Lewis, the *Arcadia* is not a pastoral romance so much as an epic. It deals only in a secondary way with the loves of nymphs and shepherds and primarily with heroic adventures, battles, and affairs of state. In it Sidney is intent on teaching moral and political lessons, as well as discussing important issues of philosophy and theology. Though he writes in the chivalrous tradition, he points out the horror of war. Above all, he is concerned to set forth certain ideals of honor, loyalty, and friendship for the edification of his readers.

His *Defence of Poesie* or *An Apologie for Poetrie* is considered one of the most important English critical essays. By poetry Sidney means imaginative literature, or fiction, in general; "poetry" could be in prose form, not necessarily in verse. Answering contemporary criticisms of poetry, Sidney put a high value on the poet, whom he regarded as an inspired prophet, a creator, and a moral teacher. Poetry, he claimed, was superior to all other arts because while bound by a given subject matter, the poet "bringeth his own stuff, and doth not learn a conceit out of a matter, but maketh matter for a conceit...."

Perhaps most important, the poet combines moral teaching with delight. The philosopher does not have the same power to bring delight to his teaching, and the historian is bound by "the truth of a foolish world," and the truth is not always a stimulus to virtue. Thus poetry is the oldest, noblest, and most fruitful of all the branches of learning. So Sidney meets the criticisms of the detractors of poetry.

He drew much of his material from ancient writers, especially Aristotle, whom he did not always interpret correctly. In discussing tragedy, for example, he invoked the authority of Aristotle for the doctrine that all the action should occur in the same place and within a span of one day. These so-called unities, which do not really represent Aristotle's thought, were to have a good deal of influence on European drama.

Edmund Spenser (1552-99) was, as his epitaph in Westminster Abbey declares, the "prince of poets in his time," the greatest writer of nondramatic poetry of his age. He was a learned poet, educated at the Merchant Taylors' School in London under its famous headmaster, Richard Mulcaster. Later Spenser attended Cambridge University and received his master's degree in 1576. He spent much of his life in government service in Ireland, where he became a good friend of Walter Raleigh.

Spenser's works show the range of influences to which he responded. His master, Mulcaster, was a strong advocate of the use of the vernacular, like Du Bellay and the Pléiade in France. The chivalric epic tradition, as exemplified in the work of Ariosto in Italy, affected him, as did humanism. There are also allegorical elements, derived from the medieval tradition, in his work. He wrote both sonnets and pastoral poetry, thus displaying his awareness of the poetical currents of the time.

As a young man Spenser became acquainted with Sir Philip Sidney, for whom he developed an enormous admiration. Both men were Puritans, both were deeply interested in politics, and both had high moral principles, which they sought to inculcate in their readers through their works.

In 1579 Spenser published his *Shepheardes Calendar*, twelve eclogues, each for one month of the year. In it the poet combines two pastoral traditions: the classical, which came down from Theocritus and Virgil, and the English, of which Chaucer was the leading representative. The characters in the poem refer to real people known to Spenser. There are religious implications; Spenser seems to attack popery and defend the Protestant position.

In 1594 Spenser was married and in 1595 published a volume containing his *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*. The *Amoretti*, a sonnet sequence, and the *Epithalamion*, a wedding hymn, celebrate his marriage and his bride. The sonnets are in the Petrarchan tradition; the lover addresses his lady in terms of extravagant praise and adoration and uses figures reminiscent of Petrarch's comparing her eyes to the sun, moon, stars and so forth. She is cruel, yet pure and heavenly, not made out of one of the four earthly elements, but of a fifth element, "the sky."

The *Epithalamion* (Greek word for a nuptial song) is filled, as the name would lead us to expect, with classical allusions. It is written in a very elaborate stanza form with a rigid rhyme scheme and a recurrent refrain in the last line of each stanza. In spite of all this, it is not artificial or stilted, but stately and majestic, with joy and dignity, a fitting celebration of marriage.

Among his many other works we can note only one, *The Faerie Queene*, which, even though he did not live to finish it, is his masterpiece. It was planned to be in twelve books,

each representing one of the moral virtues. Six books were finished, and there also remain two cantos, known as the Mutabilitie Cantos, which might have formed part of the seventh. The plan of the poem shows its moral purpose. The heroes of the first two books the Red Cross Knight and Sir Guyon indicate that the poem is in form an epic of chivalry, telling of knightly adventures. The virtues holiness, chastity, friendship, justice, courtesy, and constancy present an interesting mixture of Christian, classic, and chivalrous ideals reminiscent of the ideals of Renaissance education found in the schools of Vittorino da Feltre and other Italian humanist educators.

The Faerie Queene is an allegory, with its numerous and intricately woven stories proceeding on many levels of meaning. As an allegory it is in the medieval tradition. One of the themes is the search of Prince Arthur for Gloriana, the Faerie Queene, whom he had seen only in a vision. This represents Magnanimity (Arthur) seeking glory, or honor (Gloriana). But this glory in turn represents the true, that is the divine, glory. Thus there is here both a Christian and a Platonic significance. In addition, Gloriana stands for Queen Elizabeth herself.

Though the poem was never finished, and though its structure is extraordinarily complicated and intricate, it is one of the great poems in the English language, for its numerous vivid images and the beauty and richness of its poetic diction. Just as it drew on many traditions of the past, it had great influence on the poetry of the ages that followed.

From Spenser, the greatest nondramatic poet of the Elizabethan Age, we can turn to the dramatic achievements of the period, which culminated in the plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare. By the end of the Middle Ages, England possessed a rich dramatic tradition. The surviving dramatic works from the medieval period are chiefly religious. A popular form was the miracle play, on a theme from the Bible or the lives of the saints, presented by guilds and acted in the streets of the towns. Morality plays, like the miracle plays, had the function of teaching church doctrine on a popular level. They presented allegorical figures representing virtues and vices, as well as other abstractions such as the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. The morality tradition, representing abstract qualities by human characters, grows out of the medieval fondness for allegory and persisted well into the Tudor period. Such plays were being written and performed in the reign of Elizabeth.

The first purely secular English play still extant is a comedy, *Fulgens and Lucrece* by Henry Medwall, chaplain to Cardinal John Morton. The play was written to be performed in the household of Cardinal Morton; since Cardinal Morton died in 1500, the play must belong to the last years of the fifteenth century. It was based on a work by an Italian humanist that had been translated into English, possibly from a French version. Medwall did more than translate; he added a comic subplot, which serves as a parody to the serious main plot and is the forerunner of subplots in later plays.

Although the drama became increasingly secular in the sixteenth century, there continued to be plays on Biblical subjects, and even the secular drama often retained didactic elements. Such themes as the upbringing of the young and the corruptions in society were popular. The religious controversies of the Reformation called forth polemical plays.

Humanistic influences combined with the native tradition in English drama. This meant, among other things, that classical drama played a part. However, Greek drama the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and the comedies of Aristophanes played a minor role. It was the Roman drama that came to be translated and imitated in England. The comedies of Terence and Plautus and the tragedies of Seneca had a great vogue.

Italian drama was slower in leaving its mark, but by Elizabeth's reign Italian plays were being adapted to the English stage. The first English prose comedy, *Supposes*, by George Gascoigne, was based on a play by the Italian writer Ariosto. English playwrights imported ideas from Italy not only through the medium of Italian plays but also by drawing on Italian courtesy books, such as Castiglione's *Courtier*, and on collections of stories, including Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

Plays were at first performed in a variety of settings. The households of great men in church and state were the scenes of some productions, as we have seen in the case of Archbishop Morton. Students in the Inns of Court and the universities presented plays. Very important were the companies consisting of choir boys, the two most outstanding being those connected with the Chapel Royal and with St. Paul's. These Children of the Chapel Royal and Children of Paul's gave many performances at court. Some of the grammar schools also put on plays.

By the last quarter of the sixteenth century, however, professional companies of adult actors came to dominate the stage. Great nobles sometimes patronized companies of actors, who were known by the names of their patrons. Such a patron was the earl of Leicester, who took a real interest in his company and looked out for its welfare. The most famous of the Elizabethan companies was the Lord Chamberlain's Company, of which Shakespeare was a member. With the accession of James I, this company was taken over by James himself and became the King's Company.

In the 1570s the adult companies were giving more performances at court than the children's companies, and in the same decade the first two permanent theaters in England were built and were used by them. These first two theaters, known as *The Theatre* and *The Curtain*, were public theaters to which anyone could gain admittance on payment of the required sum.

There were also private theaters, the first of which was established in 1576 and was called

Blackfriars, since it made use of a building that had been part of a Dominican convent (the Dominicans were known in England as the Black Friars). It was used by the Children of the Chapel. Unlike the public theaters, it had a roof and provided seats for all members of the audience in the public theaters, the cheapest admission provided standing room. It also charged higher prices than the public theaters.

Important in the history of English drama was the play *Gorboduc*, or, as the title page of an early edition describes it, "The Tragedy of Ferrex and Porrex...shewed on stage before the Queen's Majesty...the 18th day of January 1561 [1562 by our reckoning] by the gentlemen of the Inner Temple." It was written by two young men, Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, both at the time members of the Inner Temple. In some ways it foreshadows *King Lear*: It tells a story based on British legend, and it preaches the evils of divided rule and uncertain succession. *Gorboduc*, king of Britain, divides his rule between his sons Ferrex and Porrex; great evils follow that bring suffering, death, and devastation to the realm. The play was apparently intended to teach the royal spectator the importance of settling the succession question promptly. While it did not have the desired effect, it does not seem to have offended Elizabeth, because both the authors had prosperous and successful careers, though not primarily as writers.

Gorboduc is important as the first English tragedy; previous tragedies in the English language had been translations of Seneca. It is also important as the first play to be written in blank verse, which was to become the standard speech of English tragedy. This form was introduced, as we have seen, by Surrey. It has many advantages for dramatic use: It is close to everyday speech in its rhythm and yet adaptable to any dramatic or poetic purpose; and it is flexible, allowing for considerable variety by small departures from the strict pattern. Rhymed lines are sometimes found, especially at the end of an act. Much of the greatest English poetry, dramatic and nondramatic, was to be written in this medium.

To illustrate the nature of blank verse, the following lines from *Gorboduc* will serve, as they will also serve to show the sort of political lessons taught by the play: "Though kings forget to govern as they ought, / Yet subjects must obey as they are bound" (5.1.50-51).

It was Christopher Marlowe (1564-93) who first showed the enormous possibilities of blank verse and established it as the standard English dramatic language. There is something mysterious, even a little sinister, about Marlowe. As a student at Cambridge University, he was most irregular in his attendance, yet received his bachelor's and master's degrees there. It has been conjectured that his absences were caused by some sort of undercover work that he was doing for the government, and that his degrees, awarded at government orders, served as a partial recompense for this service. He was regarded with great suspicion by the orthodox, accused of "atheism" that comprehensive sixteenth-century term for all deviations from accepted views as well as Epicureanism and Machiavellianism, two equally opprobrious terms. He was murdered in a tavern, where he had been in the company of some dubious characters, as a result of a brawl that may have

arisen out of a controversy over who was to pay the bill. He was killed with his own dagger.

This squalid and miserable death, before he had even reached the age of thirty, ended the career of an amazing dramatic genius. Nobody before him and hardly anyone since could invest blank verse with such thundering power and such soaring beauty. Passages from *Tamburlaine the Great*, Part I, will illustrate both the power and the beauty. In Act IV, Scene 2, Tamburlaine says to the dethroned sultan, Bajazet

The chiefest God, first mover of that sphere
 Enchas'd with thousands ever-shining lamps,
 Will sooner burn the glorious frame of heaven
 Than it should so conspire my overthrow.
 But, villain, thou that wishest this to me,
 Fall prostrate on the low disdainful earth
 And be the footstool of great Tamburlaine
 That I may rise into my royal throne.

Thus Tamburlaine, the irresistible world conqueror, makes kings his footstools. These lines show Marlowe's capacity for mouth-filling rhetoric and illustrate the cosmic nature of his imagery. Nothing less than the whole universe would suffice to express the scope of his aspirations.

But Tamburlaine, speaking of the fair Zenocrate, can speak another language, the language of love and beauty:

If all the pens that ever poets held
 Had fed the feeling of their masters' thoughts,
 And every sweetness that inspir'd their hearts,
 Their minds, and muses on admired themes;
 If all the heavenly quintessence they still [distill]
 From their immortal flowers of poesy,
 Wherein as in a mirror we perceive
 The highest reaches of a human wit;
 If these had made one poem's period,
 And all combin'd in beauty's worthiness,
 Yet should there hover in their restless heads
 One thought, one grace, one wonder at the least,
 Which into words no virtue can digest.

[act 5, scene 1]

The thought that no virtue can digest into words is typical of Marlowe's heroes, striving to grasp the unattainable and express the inexpressible. Characteristic of these boundless yearnings are these words, also put into the mouth of Tamburlaine:

Nature that fram'd us of four elements,
 Warring within our breasts for regiment,
 Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds.
 Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
 The wondrous architecture of the world
 And measure every wand'ring planet's course,
 Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
 And always moving as the restless spheres,
 Will us to wear ourselves and never rest
 Until we reach the ripest fruit of all,
 That perfect bliss and sole felicity,
 The sweet fruition of an earthly crown.

[act 2, scene 7]

Tamburlaine strives after power without end, and nothing can check his triumphant drive. He is utterly ruthless and without mercy to his enemies. The play was so popular that Marlowe felt called upon to write a sequel, *Tamburlaine the Great, Part II*. In this second part the conqueror loses his Zenocrate by death, and at the end yields to the only foe that could ever subdue him death itself.

Tamburlaine's boundless desires and stirrings set the pattern for Marlowe's other heroes. The *Tragicall History of A Doctor Faustus* is a retelling of the Faust story. Originating in Germany, it had become known in England through *The Historie of the damnable Life and deserved Death of Dr. John Faustus*, a translation of a German work published in 1592. The story has had a perennial fascination and has been told many times. Several operas have been written on the theme. The most famous literary version of it is that by Goethe. In more recent times it has been treated by Thomas Mann in his *Doctor Faustus*, and by the American writer John Hersey in a novel, *Too Far To Walk*.

The story of Faust is that of a man who agrees to bestow his soul on the Devil at the time of his death in return for certain gifts during his lifetime. Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* is a scholar who, having plumbed the depths of all human learning, finds himself dissatisfied. He longs for power over all

things and seeks to attain it by magic. As a result of his spells, he is put in touch with the infernal powers, to whom he agrees to give his soul. In return he is given twenty-four years of boundless power.

Much of the action consists of Faustus making use of the powers diabolically bestowed on him. These exhibitions of power are disappointingly trivial, consisting largely of playing tricks on such figures as the emperor and the pope. There is also the famous scene in which his devilish helper Mephistopheles calls up Helen of Troy, whom Faustus greets in the speech beginning with the words: "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships, / And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?" Later in the same speech he addresses her in this manner:

O, Thou art fairer than the evening's air,
 Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.
 Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
 When he appeared to hapless Semele,
 More lovely than the monarch of the sky
 In wanton Arethusa's azure arms;
 And none but thou shalt be my paramour.

[act 5, scene 1]

During the play, Faustus has many opportunities to repent and be saved, but he never grasps them; and so at the end, in a horrifying scene, the devils carry away his soul to everlasting torment.

Like Tamburlaine, Faustus represents the striving after the boundless in a somewhat different form not in military conquest, but in the knowledge of the secrets of the universe and the power that comes from such knowledge. He is an example of the Renaissance magus, a type to be discussed at more length in a subsequent chapter. In *The Jew of Malta*, Marlowe presents another form of the aspiration after the limitless. Barabas, the Jew, is interested in wealth, and his fortune is immense. At the start of the play, he is found counting his riches, and he speaks of "Infinite riches in a little room." He is a monster of iniquity, who stops at nothing to vent his hatred of Christians. His acts of cruelty and his betrayal of Christians and Moslems are fittingly rewarded in the end when he dies in a boiling cauldron. His wickedness, like in Shakespeare's *Shylock*, must have appealed to the anti-Semitism of Marlowe's Elizabethan audience. Jews had been expelled from England by Edward I at the end of the thirteenth century and had not yet been readmitted, so the common prejudice was fed on hearsay and on such

plays as those of Marlowe and Shakespeare. The Jew of Malta is based on no known literary source.

Barabas is represented as a disciple of "Machevill," who makes his first appearance on the Elizabethan stage in the prologue to the play. He announces some of the maxims associated with his name, for example, this one: "I count religion but a childish toy, / And hold there is no sin but ignorance." Henceforth, Machiavelli was to be referred to often on the Elizabethan stage as a representative of the blackest wickedness. Shakespeare's Richard III, a character as wicked as Barabas, promises to "set the murderous Machiavel to school." (Henry VI, Part III, 3.2.)

Until this time, the chief characters in Marlowe's plays had been dynamic protagonists, whose character and actions largely determined the course of events. They remained the same kinds of personalities throughout, showing little sign of development. In his greatest play, Edward the Second, this all changed. (It is possible that Edward the Second was not the last of Marlowe's plays, and that it was written earlier than Doctor Faustus. However, it differs sufficiently from the other plays to be discussed last.) Edward the Second is a real tragedy; most of his other works can more accurately be called melodramas. The chief character is the king who reigned in England from 1307 to 1327 and who was then deposed and murdered. Unlike the rest of Marlowe's heroes, he is weak and at the mercy of other forces. He is represented as dominated by his homosexual affection for Gaveston, his baseborn favorite. The queen, Isabella, has turned to young Mortimer, with whom she is having a love affair, while Mortimer plots to depose the king and take his place. The king is deposed and, at Mortimer's command, murdered. But the dead king's son and successor, Edward III, learns what has happened and avenges his father's murder by having Mortimer put to death instantly and Isabella sent to the Tower to await trial.

At the start of the play, the sympathies of the audience or the reader are not with the king, but as the action progresses and disaster overtakes him and his character develops, he becomes unlike Barabas a more sympathetic figure, so that by the time of the ghastly scene in which he is murdered the audience has changed sides. Perhaps Marlowe himself was changing and growing, having compassion for life's victims, whereas earlier he seemed to side always with the conquerors. There is no way to know how far or in what directions his extraordinary talents would have developed.

William Shakespeare (1564 1616) was born in the same year as Marlowe. If he had died at the same age, he would be considered the lesser of the two

writers, since his development was slower and his achievement by 1593 was less impressive. He lived to finish his work, however, and became the greatest playwright and the supreme writer in the English language, or perhaps in any language. His dramatic work passes through well-defined phases: first a period of patriotic history plays, "happy" comedies, and romantic tragedy (*Romeo and Juliet*); then the great and terrible tragedies and the "bitter" comedies; and finally a group of plays in which there predominates a note of peace and reconciliation, of faith in the ultimate goodness of the world and of man. This faith is not naive, but mature and without illusions.

Shakespeare was born in the Warwickshire market town of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564. The extent of his schooling is uncertain. It may not have been great, though there is a later story that at one time he taught school himself. In any event, he had a capacious mind and was sensitive to the leading intellectual issues of his day. By 1592 he was established in London and making a reputation as a playwright. By 1612 he had virtually finished writing his plays and had retired to Stratford, where he died in 1616.

Shakespeare, in the words of Professor Gerald Bentley, was the most complete man of the theater of his time. He was not only a writer of plays but also an actor and theater owner. As already mentioned, he was a member of the Lord Chamberlain's Company, founded in 1593, which became the King's Company on the accession of James I in 1603. Along with other members of the company, he was part owner of the Globe theater and later of Blackfriars.

In addition to the plays, Shakespeare wrote two long narrative poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, both of which deal with subjects from antiquity and are largely erotic in content; a number of shorter poems; and the sonnets.

The sonnets were first published in 1609, possibly without his consent, and comprise a sequence of 154 poems. One common Renaissance theme that has found expression in Shakespeare's sonnets is the proud assurance of the poet's power to confer immortality on the subject of his verse.

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rime;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,

And broils root out the work of masonry,
 Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
 The living record of your memory.
 'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
 Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
 Even in the eyes of all posterity
 That wear this world out to the ending doom.
 So, till the judgement that yourself arise,
 You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

[No. LV]

Two persons figure prominently in the sonnets. One is a youth whom Shakespeare addresses in words of fervent love and adoration, as well as reproach and disillusionment. In some poems the poet himself is contrite, admitting that he has wronged the beloved. Sometimes he gives way to doubt, as when he refers to his "tongue-tied Muse" (No. LXXXV) or thinks of his advancing years and death. "No longer mourn for me when I am dead / Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell / Give warning to the world that I am fled / From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell...." (No. LXXI)

The other person who plays a leading part in the sonnets is a woman who is referred to by critics as the Dark Lady. In one sonnet Shakespeare says her eyes are "raven black," (No. CXXVII) though in another he tells her, "In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds." (No. CXXXI) This note of bitterness is constant in the sonnets that deal with her. "When my love swears that she is made of truth, / I do believe her, though I know she lies." (No. CXXXVIII) The relationship is one that binds the poet in spite of himself and makes him ashamed of his bondage. To put the finishing touch on his bitterness, he finds that the two persons he loves have begun to love one another the good one, the Fair Youth, is being tempted by the bad one, the Dark Lady.

The sonnets are widely regarded as containing autobiographical references. The identity of the Dark Lady is not known, but two men are often suggested as the Fair Youth: Henry Wriothesley, earl of Southampton, and William Herbert, earl of Pembroke, nephew of Sir Philip Sidney. Some critics have called Shakespeare's sonnets "the greatest love-poetry in the world."

Shakespeare wrote ten plays dealing with events in English history. With

the exception of the late Henry VIII, which may not have been wholly written by him, all these plays appeared before 1600. Eight of them (all except King John) fall into two groups of four, often referred to as the two tetralogies. The earlier consists of Henry VI in three parts and Richard III, and deals with the conflict between Lancaster and York. The latter in terms of composition includes Richard II, the two parts of Henry IV, and Henry V. Taken as a whole, therefore, these eight plays cover the period of English history from the reign of Richard II, who was deposed in 1399, to the death of Richard III and the accession of Henry Tudor, Henry VII, on Bosworth Field in 1485.

English chronicle plays had existed since about 1580, and had become increasingly popular. Their patriotic tone is carried on in Shakespeare's plays, which also exhibit a clearly defined philosophy of history. This philosophy, which was held by educated and thoughtful people of the time, accepted the concept of the "Great Chain of Being" and of the importance of the cosmic order with the corollary of the wickedness of any disturbance to that order, including rebellion against the state and against the king.

Furthermore, history was seen as having a moral aspect. Wickedness is punished; goodness is rewarded. This fits in with a growing search for cause and effect in history. The reigns of kings are linked together by the results of sins working themselves out over the generations. Thus as we see in Shakespeare's two tetralogies, though Richard II was not a good king, his deposition and still more his murder, must be considered crimes; the usurper, Henry IV (Bolingbroke), is never allowed to forget his guilt. His reign is troubled by rebellious subjects, and in his sleepless nights he can complain:

O sleep! O gentle sleep!
 Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,
 That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down
 And steep my senses in forgetfulness?

.....

Canst thou, O partial sleep! give thy repose
 To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,
 And in the calmest and most stillest night,
 With all appliances and means to boot,
 Deny it to a king? Then, happy low, lie down!
 Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

[2 Henry IV, 3.1]

The death of Henry IV and the accession of Henry V mark a change. Henry V is the ideal king. His wayward youth, as Prince Hal in the Henry IV plays, is now revealed as only a period of preparation for the burdens of kingship. He repudiates his disreputable companions, including Falstaff, and stands forth as the leader of his people, set apart from them by the splendor of his majesty yet linked to them by mutual affection and understanding and by the fact that the English, unlike the French, are free men. Thus in the play Henry V, the English and their king are able to win the glorious victory of Agincourt.

But the death of Henry V was followed by the civil struggle of Lancaster and York and the wicked reign of Richard III. The three Henry VI plays, although among Shakespeare's earliest works and hence immature, illustrate the doctrine of the evils of civil war and the damage that private rivalries can do to the public good. Only when Englishmen turn against one another can they expose themselves to the danger of foreign conquest.

The last play of the group, Richard III, pictures one of Shakespeare's most famous villains. Richard is a cripple whose physical deformity mirrors the depravity of his soul. But his wickedness finally catches up with him, and he is defeated and killed at Bosworth by the forces of Henry Tudor, earl of Richmond and later Henry VII. Thus the play ends with a glorification of the Tudors, who are to restore peace and "smiling plenty, and fair prosperous days" to England.

In these eight plays Shakespeare has shown a unified conception of English history from the end of the fourteenth century to the coming of the Tudors, which is bound together by a chain of moral cause and effect that links the generations in a providential plan. Some notable expressions of English patriotism are found in the plays. Among them is the great speech of John of Gaunt in Richard II (Act II, Scene 1), which includes these lines:

This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands;

This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England....

In the two parts of Henry IV and in Henry V, Shakespeare went beyond the confines of kings and nobles to produce a picture of English society in his day that has been called epic in scope. All sorts of social classes, from the country and from the town, are presented so vividly that Shakespeare must have seen them all and observed them closely. Such unforgettable characters as Fluellen, Pistol, Justice Shallow, and Mistress Quickly bear witness to the breadth of his genius and the depths of his human sympathies.

Of the English history plays, Richard II and Richard III are called tragedies. In addition to these, Shakespeare wrote ten other tragedies, from the early and bloody Titus Andronicus, about 1593 or 1594, to Timon of Athens, about 1607 or 1608, which may have been written only partly by him or, if entirely his, may never have been finished. From about 1600 to about 1608, he wrote his greatest tragedies: Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, and Antony and Cleopatra. During this same period, the so-called comedies that he wrote have a tone of bitterness and disillusionment that shows their affinity to the tragedies. The only exception is *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, written early in this period.

Common to all great tragedy is what may be called the tragic view of life, which sees man borne down by forces of evil that all his good intentions and nobility of spirit cannot resist. His nobility lies not in triumph but in the dignity with which he bears his defeat. This does not mean that the wicked go unpunished, and in Shakespeare they do not. Evil may win a triumph over good, within the confines of the drama, but the human instruments of evil destroy themselves as well.

The range and richness of Shakespeare's tragedies are inexhaustible, and there can be room here for only a few comments. *Romeo and Juliet*, his tragedy of young love, comes from a period when the lyric element was very strong in Shakespeare's plays, and the result is some of his most eloquent love poetry. For example, Romeo's speech when he first sees Juliet: "O! she doth teach the torches to burn bright. / It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night / Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear; / Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear! (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1.5)

Julius Caesar, which draws largely from Shakespeare's reading of Plutarch, contains more of his reflections on politics. Caesar is a great man, who bestrides "the narrow world like a Colossus." The conspirators, led by the noble but ineffectual Brutus, kill Caesar to avert tyranny, but are themselves

defeated by another strong man, Mark Antony. The death of Caesar is foreshadowed by portents in the heavens and remarkable occurrences on the earth; as Caesar's wife says: "When beggars die there are no comets seen; / The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes." (Julius Caesar, 2.2) This also shows the correspondence between all the elements in the cosmic order: The heavens, the body politic, and the body and soul of man are bound together, and disorder in one sphere must bring corresponding disorder elsewhere. These correspondences underlie all of Shakespeare's tragedies.

With Hamlet (1600-01) the period of the greatest tragedies is ushered in. Hamlet is destroyed and carries others to destruction by his indecision, which prevents him from avenging his father's death. It is not yet agreed just why Hamlet does not do his duty. Is it the impotence of the man of reflection faced by the necessity of decisive action? Is it a paralysis of the will resulting from the realization of his mother's true character?

Hamlet is destroyed by the inability of his character to cope with the demands of the situation in which he finds himself. In Othello, on the other hand, the hero is ruined by the simplicity of his nature when exposed to the villainy of Iago, one of Shakespeare's most remarkable creations. Through Iago's machinations, Othello is roused to a frenzy of suspicion of his lovely wife, Desdemona, which leads him to murder her; and when he learns of his mistake, to kill himself. The great question is: What induces Iago to commit his unspeakable acts? He gives a number of reasons, but we feel that these are no more than pretexts. Iago appears to be pure unmotivated evil; he destroys Othello and Desdemona not to gain something for himself, not even because he bears them any particular ill will, but simply because of an affinity for wickedness. He symbolizes the faculties of reason perverted to destructive ends. If he were moved by passion, he would be less horrifying. It is his coldness and detachment that make him so appalling. Even at the end, Iago, though arrested and facing torture and probable death, seems unmoved and unbroken.

The same sort of unmotivated evil appears in Goneril and Regan, daughters of Lear. King Lear has often been called the greatest of Shakespeare's tragedies. Its scope is cosmic; it deals not only with the relationships among humans, but with the nature of society and the state, and ultimately with the whole question of the government of the universe. Lear is a king; as we have seen, this places him at the head of one of the hierarchies that compose the Elizabethan conception of the cosmos, the hierarchy of the state or human society. When he is impelled, largely by foolish vanity, to divide up his kingdom among his daughters, he is interfering with the natural order of

things. This disturbance is accompanied by or indeed, gives rise to every other kind of disorder. Lear's eventual insanity is one form of disorder; the terrible storm to which he is exposed in Act III is another.

There is even a subplot in *Lear*, which repeats the main plot. As Lear has turned against his faithful daughter Cordelia only to be betrayed by the two ungrateful ones, so Gloucester has relied on his treacherous bastard son Edmund and cast off the faithful Edgar, as a result of which he is blinded and becomes, like Lear, a homeless wanderer. Eventually retribution overtakes Goneril, Regan, and Edmund, but not without destroying Lear, Gloucester, and even the exquisite Cordelia. Evil has destroyed itself, but it has taken a terrible toll among those who have not deserved so harsh a fate.

While Shakespeare wrote no tragedies after about 1608, and while all his history plays (except *Henry VIII*) were written before 1600, he wrote comedies throughout his career. It is true, however, that in his case the word comedy is used to designate plays that vary strikingly in tone and outlook. The most lighthearted and amusing were written in his earlier days, from *The Comedy of Errors* (1592-93) to *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1600-01). There is generally at least one love story, and the power of love is celebrated. One theme that appears more than once is that of people who scorn love at first but later fall in love and repent of their folly before finally gaining what they desire.

And yet, even in these joyous and seemingly carefree comedies, there appears an undertone of disillusionment and skepticism about the constancy of love, especially of the love of men for women. Shakespeare seems to have had an exceptionally sensitive appreciation of the feminine point of view. In one of his most enchanting comedies, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the love of the young men seems remarkably fickle and changeable. Of course, this fickleness is partly due to the magical charms of fairies; it is not clear whether the action has all really happened or has been a dream. But the great enchanter is Shakespeare himself, and he seems to be deliberately leaving us in doubt as to the boundaries between dreams and wakefulness, between appearance and reality.

From about 1601 to 1605, at the beginning of the period when he wrote the great tragedies, Shakespeare wrote three comedies, which have been appropriately called "bitter": *Troilus and Cressida*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, and *Measure for Measure*. They are not comic, amusing, or lighthearted, and are classed as comedies simply because the chief characters are alive at the end of the play, and except in *Troilus and Cressida* lovers are united or reunited and wicked designs are foiled. But

there is a spirit of disillusionment and even disgust about them that has led some students, like E. K. Chambers, to conclude that about 1601, "The poet lost his faith in the world."¹⁴ The theme of lust is prominent in them all, as it is in *Hamlet*, *Lear*, *Othello*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, and is associated with human degradation.

Troilus and Cressida may illustrate the common characteristics of the three plays. The familiar story, set against the background of the Trojan War, gave Shakespeare the opportunity to show the seamy side of the ideal of knightly honor, which he had celebrated in *Henry V*, and the ideal of romantic love, which he had presented in *Romeo and Juliet*. The Greek heroes waste their time in petty bickering, and the greatest of them, Achilles, proves himself a coward. Cressida, who pledges eternal love to Troilus, is unfaithful to him the first chance she gets. Thersites's comment is appropriate: "Lechery, lechery; still, wars and lechery: nothing else holds fashion." (Act V, scene 2) Thersites himself and Pandarus add to the general atmosphere of nastiness and decay that pervades the whole play.

One character, Ulysses, sees things clearly and without illusions. It is he who makes the famous speech on "degree" and order, which clearly describes the cosmic outlook of Shakespeare's age:

The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre
Observe degree, priority, and place,
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
Office, and custom, in all line of order:

.....

O! when degree is shak'd
Which is the ladder to all high designs,
The enterprise is sick.

.....

Take but degree away, untune that string,
And, hark! what discord follows;

[Act I, Scene 3]

With the exception of *Henry VIII*, Shakespeare's last plays are romantic comedies or tragicomedies: *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*,

and Pericles, Prince of Tyre. Although there appear in these plays the forces that make for tragedy, they are invariably foiled. The lost are found, the dead Hermione returns to life, wickedness is defeated, and virtue triumphs. Some of Shakespeare's noblest and most attractive feminine characters appear in these plays: Thaisa and Marina in Pericles, Prince of Tyre, Imogen in Cymbeline, Hermione and Perdita in The Winter's Tale, and Miranda in The Tempest. There is an air of serenity and acceptance of the world. It is as though Shakespeare had reached in these years an assurance. Evil is an inevitable part of human life, but it is not triumphant; the forces that shape man's destiny are moving in ways not always obvious to beneficent ends.

In The Tempest, Shakespeare may have been saying farewell to the stage. In Prospero the benevolent sorcerer, he may have embodied himself, and in Prospero's great speech in the first scene of Act IV he may (though we shall never be sure) be speaking for himself:

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep....

[4.1]

And so, as Prospero abjures his magic, sets the spirits free, breaks his staff and drowns his book, the greatest poet of his nation turned his back on the stage, to spend his last years in the peace and comfort of his native town.



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CHAPTER 21

POLITICAL THOUGHT IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Political thinking in this period was stimulated by the rise of the national state and by the upheavals in religion. However, the theoretical response to these great changes often drew heavily upon traditional ideas and assumptions, at least north of the Alps, where political thinkers were not as ready as were Machiavelli and Guicciardini to throw off customary preconceptions. They still saw political life and its problems largely from a religious point of view and from the background of a traditional hierarchical conception of the nature of the universe.

LUTHER AND CALVIN

The leaders of the Protestant Reformation often were quite conservative in their political ideas. This is especially true of Luther. He had the attachment to order and the hatred of disorder that were characteristic of medieval thinkers. In keeping with this outlook, he viewed society in the time-honored way, as consisting of various classes or estates that had been ordained by the Almighty to perform specific functions. Any departure from these arrangements would introduce that disorder of which he had such horror. A violent disturbance of the established order was an especially grave sin; hence his harsh condemnation of the Peasants' Revolt.

Luther's pessimism about human nature was inevitably reflected in his political ideas. He was convinced that most men were not, and would never be, truly Christian. In a society of real Christians, secular authority would not be needed; but since men are by nature sinful and evil, the restraints of the law are necessary to check their wicked desires. Therefore, the state exists by divine ordinance, and the magistrate wields the sword to repress the evil and protect the good. It is right for Christians to serve the state, even if it means using force to punish evildoers. Similarly, war is justifiable in defense of the state.

Luther's respect for the office of ruler or magistrate did not involve any great respect for their persons. A wise prince, he observed, had always been a rare bird, and a pious one even more rare. They are usually fools or knaves from whom we must expect the worst,

especially in divine matters. This anti-monarchical bias is a prominent theme in the thought of the period, at least on the Continent; it is found in Erasmus and Calvin and even in Machiavelli. In England it is not very conspicuous it would have been dangerous but possibly it may be glimpsed in More's Utopia.

Thus it is untrue to allege that Luther believed in princely absolutism and willingly subjected the church to the state. He did call on the German princes in 1520 to undertake the reform of the church because it had not reformed itself. In his own church in later years, the secular authorities carried out visitations corresponding to those formerly made by bishops in order to test the competence of the clergy and the state of ecclesiastical discipline. But Luther firmly refused to admit the right of the secular authority to interfere in spiritual things that is, in matters of faith.

Whether the ruler is good or not, according to Luther, subjects must never resist, because civil government has been established by God. On the other hand, obedience is not unconditional; the political thought of the reformers, including Luther, can best be summed up in the Biblical statement, "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5: 29) The ruler must not be obeyed if he commands anything against conscience or God's law; a good example, for the reformers, would be the suppression of what they regarded as the true worship or enforced attendance at Mass. Since active resistance, as well as obedience, is forbidden in such a case, the only recourse was to submit passively and suffer the consequences, even martyrdom.

In political thought, as in theology, Calvin is in essential agreement with Luther. His legal training and even his classical studies helped to give him a great respect for law and authority. Civil magistracy he regarded as the most sacred of human callings. Subjects should reverence their rulers as God's vicegerents; obedience to rulers is obedience to God. Magistrates have the right to use force in the punishment of crimes, but should avoid excessive severity and unnecessary cruelty. War is justified when it is a matter of defending one's country against outside attack. But princes should resort to war only in case of extreme necessity, and should always be motivated by public spirit, never by private interests.

Princes have the right to a certain splendor in their way of life, to be paid for out of the people's taxes, but they should remember where the money comes from and not use it for luxury or to gratify their passions. Calvin's reference to the passions of princes reminds us of his distrust in monarchs. As early as 1532, in his youthful edition of Seneca's *De clementia*, he attacked the pride and inhumanity of kings and showed his hatred of tyranny. The *Institutes* strike the same note. There is scarcely one prince in a hundred who does not despise divine things. No virtue is so necessary in kings as moderation, and none is so rare. Wicked kings must be endured and obeyed, as God's punishment for our sins; the Almighty will punish their wickedness. Yet an oppressed people is not entirely without recourse, for God sometimes raises up an avenger like Moses, for His people.

There may also be magistrates within a state whose function it is to protect the people by moderating the power of kings. There were such men among the Greeks and Romans, and in modern kingdoms this function may be performed by the estates when they are assembled. Private individuals on their own initiative are never authorized to resist.

Calvin, unlike Luther, considered the problem of the best form of government and chose either aristocracy or a mixture of aristocracy and democracy. His conception of aristocracy involved elected officials, not a hereditary caste. He was at heart a republican, but feared the possible disorders of democracy. Liberty was very important to Calvin, but it should be liberty under law, not unbridled license. Law was vital in Calvin's conception of society and government. In common with most thinkers of his time, he recognized an eternal law binding on men in all ages and places. This natural law or, as Calvin also called it, the moral law, had two chief articles: to worship God and to love one another. Equity, which is embodied in this law, must be the aim of all man-made laws. The laws of different nations may rightly differ; Calvin denied that the legal enactments of the Jews, recorded in the Old Testament, should serve as a model for other peoples and times.

It is perfectly legitimate for Christians to seek recourse in the courts when the occasion demands it. The litigant in such a case must not hate the other party or desire to harm him but must feel benevolence and affection toward him. Calvin admits that this is rare.

Calvin was, of course, deeply concerned over the question of the proper relationship between church and state. We have already traced the actual arrangements he helped to effect in Geneva. These were a logical attempt to carry out the views expressed in his writings. The chief purpose of the state is to maintain true religion; it must also regulate men's lives and manners in such a way as to establish and maintain civil society in peace and tranquillity. Since the fostering of true religion is its chief aim, it must repress offenses against religion, such as idolatry, sacrilege, and blasphemy. The state is forbidden, however, to make laws concerning religion. It is interesting that Calvin, known as a persecutor of dissenters, held that the consciences of believers are exempt from all human authority. It is not easy to reconcile this with his treatment of those whom he considered heretics; perhaps this exemption from human authority did not apply to the consciences of unbelievers.

The views of the Anabaptists and other radicals of the period on the close relations that should prevail between church and state contrasted with the views of Luther, Calvin, and most of their Catholic and Protestant contemporaries. The distinctive way in which the Anabaptists envisaged this issue is so much an integral part of their whole outlook that it is discussed fully in Chapter 15.

ENGLAND

In Tudor England the traditional subjects of political philosophy were discussed against the backdrop of the emerging national state. The nature of the discussion reflected this development and also the religious revolution in the state during the course of the century. Though the changes were indeed revolutionary, political discussion tended to move along traditional paths.

English humanists were, as we have seen, much concerned with problems of society and government, and they were greatly influenced in this, as in other areas, by Erasmus. Erasmus rejected belligerent nationalism, denounced war as the greatest of evils, and distrusted kings. There was a republican strain in his thought; he was concerned for the liberties of the people and favored a government in which the people would be in control. His faith in education was particularly congenial to the thought of the English humanists.

The most important and original work of political thought produced by the English humanists was Thomas More's *Utopia*, first published in Latin in 1516 and printed at Louvain. The earliest English translation, by Ralph Robinson, did not appear until 1551. The word *Utopia* is derived from the Greek word for nowhere. The book takes the form of a conversation at the home of Peter Giles in Antwerp, and the description of *Utopia* is put in the mouth of Raphael Hythloday, a fictitious Portuguese sailor who is supposed to have sailed with Vespucci. The work is divided into two books. In the first book More and Hythloday discuss the actual governments of their day and introduce some sharp criticisms of their practices. Here More shows his sympathy with the plight of the poor. The laws that punish theft by death are too harsh, and at the same time ineffective. It would be better to provide work, so that no man would be driven to theft by the pressure of want. Landlords live in idleness on the labor of their tenants whom they fleece without mercy. Not only are they idle themselves but also they carry around with them a crowd of equally idle retainers who have never learned a useful craft and, when they are dismissed from service or when their masters die, are driven to become thieves.

In seeking the causes of the poverty that breeds theft, More refers specifically to the situation in England, where he places the blame on the men who are enclosing farm land for the purpose of raising sheep. This leads to his famous remark that the sheep are now eating men. Honest husbandmen, displaced from their land with their families and unable to find work, are forced to steal or beg. Food costs more than it did, and the rich men who own the sheep have raised the price of wool. Through the wealth and covetousness of a few, excesses and disorder have spread among all classes.

More urges Hythloday to enter public service, citing Plato on the ruler's need for wise counsel. This was a problem that More was facing at the time, since Henry VIII was pressing him to enter royal service, and Hythloday's arguments against taking such a step were undoubtedly prominent in More's mind. The sailor is quite bitter about the likelihood of kings taking good advice. He sees clearly into the predatory and cynical behavior of contemporary monarchs, interested in aggrandizement of their domains rather than content

with what they already have.

Toward the end of the first book, Hythloday comes to one of the main themes of the Utopia, the evils of private property. Where property is private, just government and prosperity are impossible; a few evil men possess everything and the rest live miserably. More disagrees, and to prove his case, Hythloday agrees to describe Utopia. This description forms the substance of the second and larger book.

The society of Utopia is strictly regulated, but at the same time is characterized by a high degree of decentralization and by representative government. There is no private property, and people live together in households of at least forty persons. Everyone is taught a craft, but in addition everyone learns husbandry and has to spend some time at it. Since everyone works, nobody works more than six hours a day. Those who show a special aptitude for learning are exempt from manual labor; from this group are chosen priests and government officials. The chief happiness of the Utopians is the adornment of the mind, to which they devote time that can be spared from necessary occupations. The products of the labor of all are laid up in storehouses from which householders fetch whatever their families need without paying for it. There is plenty for all, and nobody lacks anything necessary, because all supply one another's wants. They do not use money much; gold and silver, which they regard as worthless in themselves, they hold in low regard, and the same is true of pearls and diamonds.

Bondsmen or slaves exist in Utopia. Some are being punished for grievous offenses, and there are some who in other countries have been condemned to death. Sometimes poor laborers from other countries come voluntarily to Utopia to become slaves. They are treated almost as well as free citizens, may depart when they wish, and do not leave empty-handed.

The Utopians do not make leagues with other countries. Nature has set sufficient love between man and man, so that no other bond is necessary. They detest and abhor war. Although all of them, even the women, have military training, the Utopians go to war only to defend themselves, to drive invaders out of the lands of their friends, or to deliver an oppressed people from tyranny. Sometimes they initiate war, when called by friends to help requite previous injuries. If any Utopian is injured or killed in a foreign country, the Utopians go to war unless they receive satisfaction.

The religious situation in Utopia is of special interest. There are various religions. Some worship the sun, the moon, or one of the planets; some worship a great and famous man. The greatest and wisest part of the people reject all these and believe that there is an unknown, everlasting, incomprehensible divine being, dispersed throughout the world in virtue and power. Some of the Utopians, hearing Hythloday and his companions speak of Christ, joyfully received Christianity and were baptized. King Utopus, who conquered the

land and founded the state that bears his name, made certain laws that still stand. He decreed that every man could follow the religion of his choice and might do all that he could to persuade others to his opinion, provided that he do it peaceably and quietly. For those who should strive violently or fervently to push a religious viewpoint, the penalty was banishment or slavery. King Utopus recognized that there was only one true religion, but trusted truth by its own power to come to light at last, unless there should be contention or debate over religion, which would destroy truth. Therefore, he left everyone free to believe as he pleased, except for two things: He forbade men to believe that the soul dies with the body or to deny divine providence in the government of the world. The Utopians believe that after death vices are severely punished, while virtues are bountifully rewarded. Those who believe otherwise are not counted as men, let alone as citizens. They are deprived of honors, excluded from public employment, and despised by all.

Priests are very holy, hence very few in number. If a priest commits an offense, he is not judged in the ordinary manner, but is left to God's judgment. This rarely happens, and since there are few priests and they have no power, there is no danger to the commonwealth from possible transgressions.

Thus Hythloday concludes his description of Utopia, which he sees as the only true commonwealth. In other states he finds "nothing else than a kind of conspiracy of the rich, who are aiming at their own interests under the name and title of the commonwealth."¹⁵ All men would surely have long since come to this one true type of commonwealth, were it not for Pride, the source of all evils.

A large literature of interpretation has grown up around the Utopia, and many opinions have been put forward about its real meaning. The problem is complicated by the facts of More's life. He was above all things a devout Christian, yet Utopia is not a Christian society. He became, after the start of the Reformation, a bitter enemy of heresy, yet he allowed a diversity of religions in Utopia. Was he inconsistent? Did he change his religious views after the rise of Protestantism threatened the Roman church with a danger he could not have foreseen when he wrote his book? It is possible. Yet some scholars have seen him as consistent throughout; one of the most distinguished of the students of More, R. W. Chambers, sees no contradiction between his views in Utopia and his actual practice. He points out that even in Utopia, though men have a right to freedom of religious opinion, they do not have the right to disturb public order in propagating their views, and they lose their rights as men and citizens if they fail to hold certain beliefs.

Further, if Utopia is More's ideal society, why is it not Christian, since for him Christianity is the true religion? Chambers holds that it was not his ideal society. It was an attempt to demonstrate how well men could live on the basis of the pagan virtues of justice, fortitude, wisdom, and temperance; and to show by contrast how badly Christians are doing, when they ought to do so much better. On the other hand, J. H. Hexter, in a most thoughtful analysis of the Utopia, is more inclined to take the work seriously as a

genuine expression of More's ideal society, but he says that the religious aspect of it has been given undue emphasis. More, according to Hexter, was consistently opposed to private property. The organization of the Utopian state, he contends, is best understood as directed toward the suppression of sin, above all the sin of pride. There have been, and will no doubt continue to be, numerous divergent readings of this great book, as each generation finds something in it that responds to its own needs and purposes.

The Utopia does not form part of the main stream of English political thought under Henry VIII, which was mostly devoted to an exaltation of the power of the state, that is, of the king. This current of thought is found not only in formal treaties, but also in statutes and homilies; most of all, it is found in pamphlets. There was much official propaganda to express the royalist point of view, and the control Henry exercised over the press would have made it very difficult to give voice to an opposing one.

The famous preamble to the Act of Appeals of 1533, possibly written by Thomas Cromwell, sets forth clearly the Tudor conception of the state. It asserts first of all that England is an empire which meant that it recognized no superior on earth. It goes on to say that this empire is governed by a king to whom the body politic, composed of clergy and laity, owe "next to God" their obedience. The king is endowed by God with power to settle finally and without appeal all questions that arise within his realm. Though this statute was of course directed against the international claims of the papacy, the preamble is a clear statement of the rise of the sovereign state and the rejection of the ideal of a united Christendom. According to G. R. Elton, a distinguished student of Cromwell's thought, Cromwell, as shown by this preamble and elsewhere, saw the essence of a state and of sovereignty in the law: not divine, natural, or canon law, but positive, man-made, law. This conception of sovereignty as lying essentially in the right to make law is a modern conception; in the Middle Ages, as we have seen, law was regarded as something already existing, not as something made by men.

Protestant writers tended to support the claims of the government in its insistence on the duty of obedience to the monarch. William Tyndale's *Obedience of a Christian Man* (1528) even comes close to the divine-right theory in this respect. According to Tyndale, he who judges the king judges God; the king is bound by no human laws or rules and shall give account to God only. Like Calvin, the English Protestants accepted the duty to obey even a wicked ruler, unless he commands something against God. Even then, he must not be resisted. He must be suffered as a divine punishment for men's sins. As for his own punishment, he must be left to God. Great stress was laid, especially by the paid propagandists of the government, upon the evil of rebellion.

For the writers of Henry VIII's day, the great issue was the nature of the royal authority over the church. Some of the arguments used to justify that authority went back to the fourteenth century and to Wycliffe, Ockham, and Marsilio of Padua. These arguments refused to recognize in the church or the clergy any coercive power, because such power

is reserved for the civil ruler. The church should properly confine itself to spiritual functions. Clergymen are the king's subjects as much as laymen. The church consists not merely of the clergy, but of the whole body of Christians. Some arguments went beyond this, however, and asserted that the king was the best interpreter of Scripture and had the right to define doctrine, either alone or with the participation of Parliament or convocation of the bishops. It was generally agreed that the king did not have the power to administer the sacraments or consecrate clergymen, and Henry claimed no such power.

In spite of the tendency to exalt the king's power, Tudor writers, following medieval tradition, recognized that it was subject to limitations. One such limitation was the law of nature, binding on all earthly powers. It was also held that in important legislation the king must collaborate with Parliament; he was subject to divine and natural law and to positive law and custom as well. The growing importance of England's Parliament was reflected in political theory. Legislation was coming to be regarded as the joint product of king and Parliament, and the king's power to issue proclamations on his authority alone was seen as a prerogative to be exercised only in emergencies.

In 1531, Sir Thomas Elyot published his Booke named the Gouvernour. Elyot was a member of the gentry, educated at the Inns of Court and Oxford. Through his friendship with Thomas More, he became a humanist, and his book displays the ideals of More's humanism in its concern for education and in its devotion to the public welfare, besides being crammed with references to ancient history and literature. Elyot had practical experience in government; one of his positions was that of chief clerk of the King's Council, which he held from 1523 to the fall of Wolsey in 1530. The governor of the title means, not the ruler himself, but a member of the ruling class, and the task which Elyot set for himself was that of forming a proper governing class for his country. The book was very influential in establishing a model for the gentry.

Elyot's social ideals are set within the framework of the traditional view of the universe and of human society. The universe and society are hierarchical, based on the "Great Chain of Being." He emphasized order and "degree" in a manner that anticipates the famous speech of Ulysses in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. In fact, there are verbal resemblances between the two texts, which make it likely that Elyot was one of Shakespeare's sources. In accordance with his hierarchical conception, Elyot prefers a monarchical type of government; men, like all other beings, need one head. Aristocracy and democracy, the alternative forms of government, are condemned.

In outlining the proper education of the government officials for whom he is writing, Elyot shows the influence of Italian humanist ideas of education and of Castiglione's *Courtier*. Latin is the earliest subject studied by the child, and Greek is begun at the age of seven. The authors chosen should be those found useful in teaching virtue and in preparing young men for public life. Among the subjects studied are logic, rhetoric,

geography, cosmography, and particularly history, which is virtually the crown of the young governor's studies, because of its incomparable pleasure and usefulness.

Philosophy, especially moral philosophy, occupies a vital place, and is studied from classical writings, especially the works of Plato, as well as from the Bible. Two works of Erasmus are included in the curriculum. Physical exercise is emphasized, and there is a defense of the value of dancing.

Much of *The Boke named the Gouvernour* (1531) consists of commonplaces; as a whole it is devoid of originality. Its interest lies in the extent to which it illustrates humanistic influences, in the numerous examples given from classical and sacred history, in Elyot's unhappy reflections on the degeneracy of his age, and in the concern it exhibits for the proper training of a new ruling class, which in this case was the gentry. It also has its usefulness as an exposition of ideas which, however timeworn and trite, were widely held and influential. The ideas of hierarchy and order persisted into the reign of Elizabeth. They may be seen in the *Mirror for Magistrates*, a long poem with prose passages, written by many hands, which first appeared in 1559 and was frequently reprinted in enlarged editions. It tells stories, mostly from English history in the fifteenth century, about the fall of bad kings and sometimes lesser men. It emphasizes the importance of obedience to rulers and magistrates, and the wickedness of rebellion. It also shows that good rulers obey the law, and that God punishes the tyrant, the ruler who sets his own will in the place of law. Princes and officers rule with God's sanction, and to resist them is to resist God. Even bad rulers are sent by God to punish the people's sins. The doctrine of nonresistance was also preached, quite literally, in the homilies, sermons prepared by the government to be read in the churches. The Homily on Rebellion of 1571 called rebellion the sum of all sins and painted in horrifying terms the complete breakdown of society that supposedly would follow it.

To this insistence on the duty of obedience to authority there was a countercurrent in sixteenth-century England. The persecution of Protestants under Mary Tudor, which brought death and exile to hundreds, caused some of the exiles to rethink their political creed and arrive at conclusions which were, from the orthodox Calvinist point of view, revolutionary. The most important of these men were John Ponet, Christopher Goodman, and John Knox.

From his exile in Strasbourg, Ponet, formerly bishop of Rochester and of Winchester, expressed his views in *A Shorte Treatise of Politike Power* in 1556. He based government on natural law, which was not unusual at the time, but arrived at the unusual conclusion that when government fails to abide by this law, it can be changed. Rulers have their authority only on the condition that they rule justly and lawfully, and God has provided means for removing them when they do not. Parliaments are among these means. He departed from the Calvinistic position in that he denied the doctrine that an evil ruler or tyrant is permitted or sent by God as a punishment for the people's sins. God never sends or allows tyranny, he asserted, or means it to be obeyed. Ponet was equally original in

proclaiming the right of private individuals to decide when the time for disobedience has come. Calvin, as we have seen, had left this decision to the inferior magistrates.

According to Ponet, the Holy Ghost, which has put the laws of God and of nature in men's hearts, will indicate the proper time for disobedience. However, the deposition of tyrants should normally be left to the nobility. In his political thought, Ponet anticipated ideas that were to come into their own more than two centuries later.

In 1558 there appeared at Geneva a work by another of the Marian exiles, Christopher Goodman, entitled *How Superior Powers Oght to be Obeyd*. Goodman contended that kings owed their position to recognition by the people, and that they must be punished if they abused their power, even though they were God's lieutenants. While he also believed that the nobility was supposed to serve as a check on the abuse of kingly power, he did not leave resistance to bad rulers in the hands of the nobles alone, but conceived it as the duty of the common man also to resist.

John Knox was another exile from Mary's persecution. The evolution of his political ideas from Calvin's doctrine of obedience to a completely opposite position gains importance from his later prominence as one of the leaders in the overthrow of the Roman church in Scotland and in the establishment of a Protestant church. It was the policies of Mary Tudor's government and Knox's own exile that apparently stimulated him to a change of view. His *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* was published in 1558. In it he contended that it was always unlawful for a woman to occupy a throne, because women were lacking in the qualities needed for ruling. They were made to obey men, and for a woman to have authority over men is rebellion against God. Mary Tudor was not, therefore, a rightful ruler (or even a woman), and should be removed from the throne.

In his *Appellation* of the same year he went even further. Scotland, which at the time was under the monstrous regiment of the Catholic regent Mary of Guise, was becoming ripe for rebellion, with the Calvinists demanding freedom of worship. Knox, who had been condemned to death in absentia and burned in effigy, appealed for revolt in Scotland and declared that rebellion against idolatrous rulers was a duty. The doctrine that kings must be obeyed whether they are good or bad is blasphemous. Knox's ideas correspond with those of Goodman. The two men were closely associated, and it is not clear which one had more influence on the other.

After the triumph of Knox's party in Scotland, and the establishment of the new church, he reverted to a more orthodox view of political authority. Magistrates again became God's lieutenants, and anyone who resisted the established authorities was fighting against God.

As Protestant exiles wrote against the conditions of Mary's reign, so Catholic exiles in the reign of Elizabeth stated their objections to the condition of the church in England and its

relationship to the state. Their chief target was the royal headship of the church. There could be no church universal on earth, they contended, if it had no head on earth. If the secular ruler is in every country the head of the church, then there are churches but no Church Catholic. Thus it was denied that the church is identical with the commonwealth, as was claimed by apologists for Tudor policy; the church must be a totally separate body.

The Jesuit Robert Parsons voiced in one of his writings a principle of which he himself would not have understood the implications but which was, nevertheless, of great importance. He asserted that each man is bound first of all by his own faith and conscience in matters of religion. Therefore, he saw it as wrong to entrust one's conscience to the state or for the state to establish religion. Probably he was thinking chiefly of the right of Catholic consciences; nevertheless, the principle had a wider application. If generally accepted, it would create a situation that would require the adoption of another principle repugnant to Parsons and most of his contemporaries the principle of religious toleration.

From the time of Henry VIII, English Catholics tended to rely on the traditional concept of natural law in their protest against the crown's ecclesiastical policy. According to Reginald Pole, the royal law should conform to the law of nature. Kings, existing for natural ends, must be subordinate to the priesthood, which had a supernatural function. Kings are the lowest of the three levels of human society, the other two being the people and the priesthood, both of which kings are instituted to serve. According to Pole, the people should, therefore, rebel against the king, their servant.

Thomas More also acknowledged the presence of a higher law when he referred to points of the law that were unlawful; these, he said, men are not bound to obey. In defending himself after his condemnation, he claimed that the Act of Parliament on which his indictment was based was "repugnant to the Laws of God and His Holy Church."

In proving their points, some English Catholic writers propounded the doctrine of government by the consent of the people. William Allen argued that, while the authority of the state rested on consent and the law of nature, the church was not dependent on the consent of the people, but was based on the law of God. He implied that a government may be overturned if it does not serve the ends for which it was instituted, and particularly if it hinders the people in the attainment of their salvation. It is the church, however, not the people, that is to take the lead in the disciplining and, if need be, the deposition of the ruler. Parsons, in upholding the right of the Spanish Infanta, daughter of Philip II, to the English throne, argued that government is based on consent and that the people have the right to change rulers if necessary. He preferred a monarchical form of government, but there are various forms of monarchy, and the English form is "mixed." Kings of England are not absolute and must respect the functions of council and Parliament; they are bound by the law.

Perhaps the most important English contribution to political thought in the sixteenth century was the work of Richard Hooker, *Of The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*. Hooker (1554 1600) was a priest in the Church of England. The first four books of his great work appeared in 1593, the fifth in 1597. There were three more books, which Hooker may have finished, but they have come down to us in imperfect form. The sixth and eighth did not appear until 1648, and the seventh came out in 1662.

Hooker's book is a defense of the established church against the criticisms of the Puritans. In meeting their arguments with a temperateness and moderation that sets him far apart from the bitter and scurrilous controversialists of his day Hooker developed a theory of government that goes far beyond the immediate demands of the debate. In doing so, he helped to give his church an intellectual and philosophical basis, which it had not had and which it sorely needed. Drawing on traditional sources, including Thomas Aquinas and Marsilio of Padua, he combined them into what was in fact a new creation.

In doctrine, Hooker was a thoroughgoing Protestant. The controversy with the Puritans is about other things: order, tradition, authority, the welfare of society, and especially law. He disagreed with the Puritan position that the Bible is the only source of truth. God reveals Himself in many ways, and all these ways should be used. Particularly noteworthy is his emphasis on man's God-given faculty of reason, by which he is able to understand nature and the divine will. His regard for reason helps to reinforce his respect for tradition. "The general and perpetual voice of men is as the sentence of God Himself." What all men have learned at all times comes from nature, whose voice is God's instrument.

God has given man reason to enable him to discover law. Law is, in fact, Hooker's main subject. Like medieval thinkers, he envisaged the universe as governed by a series of laws, of which the highest was the Divine Law, which is unchanging and deals with unchanging things. Other laws deal with "things indifferent," which men can change if necessary, though they should not do so lightly. These include church ceremonies and organization. Man is both fallen tainted with wickedness and made for society. Human life before government was established was intolerable; therefore, men united in "politic societies."

Hooker based society on consent, though this consent might be implicit rather than formal. Law also rests on consent, which might have been given by our ancestors, in which case it is binding on their posterity. The laws are the acts of the whole body politic and of each member, who in consequence is bound to obey them.

On the subject of the best form of government, Hooker was open-minded. He considered monarchy to be probably the best, but did not think that God had expressly commanded it. As government rests on consent, the ruler depends on the body of the ruled, and has an obligation to govern according to law and for the general welfare. According to the law of nature, the legislative power belongs to the people, and a prince who presumes to exercise

this power by himself is no better than a tyrant. Once the people have vested power in a sovereign, this power cannot be withdrawn. God requires obedience to the ruler. Hooker provides no remedy for bad rulers; tyranny is a lesser evil than anarchy.

Hooker saw clearly the need for sovereignty, though he did not use the word. There had to be somebody in the state who was unpunishable, "or else no man shall suffer punishment." There had to be an ultimate source of justice, which received it from no superior, if justice was to be done. The sovereign must on the one hand be subject to law, on the other hand supreme in all fields. According to Hooker, the sovereign was not the king alone but the king in Parliament.

Hooker differed from the Puritan view that the church should be independent of the state. For him, the church included all Englishmen, and church and state were two aspects of the same body. The care of religion devolved on civil rulers as one of their first duties, though this should extend only to external things. The royal supremacy in the church, since it is exercised through Parliament, embodies the consent of the community just as much as does civil government; because the whole community, and, therefore, the whole church, is represented in Parliament.

FRANCE

During the sixteenth century, particularly the last few decades, a great deal of important political thinking was going on in France, stimulated by the rise of the Protestant, or Huguenot, party and by the resultant civil wars, which threatened to bring about the dissolution of the state. As in other cases seventeenth-century England is an example political upheaval brought thoughtful men face to face with the fundamental questions of political life.

The leading political question was the nature of the monarchy. One author who dealt with it was Claude de Seyssel, a man with experience of high office in both state and church. In his *La Grand Monarchie de France* published in 1519, he defended the view that a hereditary monarchy, though it had drawbacks, was in practice the best form of government, at least if it resembled that of France, which he considered the best governed country in the world. He did not base the monarchy on divine right, but on custom and expediency. What he admired most about the French monarchy was that it was not absolute, but checked by customary law and rights. The French king does not seem to be legally limited in the exercise of power, but there are effective practical restraints: the Christian faith, the parlements, and above all the body of ancient law and custom, which he respects though he is not legally bound to do so.

At the same time there developed a different theory of monarchy, an absolutist theory. This arose chiefly in the French law schools during the reigns of Francis I (1515-47), and

Henry II (1547-59). French lawyers from the time of Louis IX (St. Louis) in the thirteenth century had been doing all they could to extend the power of the crown. One of their instruments was the Roman civil law, with its idea of a law-making sovereign. The French lawyers of the early sixteenth century who supported absolute monarchy rejected the principle that the monarch requires popular consent; they asserted that he had a right to unlimited obedience and that he could make law. They agreed also that the king's power was derived from the will of God and that the king was God's vicegerent. These lawyers did not, however, attribute to the king unlimited powers; they invoked the concept of fundamental laws in France that bind even the king. There were two fundamental laws that figured most prominently in the discussion. One was the so-called Salic Law, which forbade a woman to ascend the throne of France and was interpreted as forbidding succession to the throne through the female line. The other prohibited the king from alienating the royal domain, but it was not clear just what this meant.

In opposition to absolutist doctrines there grew up a type of constitutional theory, based on resentment at the centralizing tendencies of the crown and on the growth of Protestantism, which tended to ally itself with the forces resisting the monarchy on nonreligious grounds. This body of thought claimed that the royal power was limited by an ancient constitution or by a body of customary rights. The idea of natural law as limiting the king was widely accepted, even among lawyers. The advocates of a constitutionalist theory of government in France tended to emphasize the position of either the parlements or the Estates-General as restricting the authority of the king.

In 1561, on the very eve of the religious wars, the chancellor, Michel de l'Hôpital, who was assisting Catherine de' Medici in trying to avert conflict, made a series of statements embodying his conception of the nature of the monarchy, which were of great and prophetic significance. For him, the king holds his throne not by consent but directly from God and from the ancient law of France. He is the source of law but not bound by the law. His subjects must always obey him, and rebellion is unjustified under any conditions. It is true that l'Hôpital believed in frequent meetings of the Estates-General, and he insisted that law must be based on reason, divine justice, and the law of nature. Nevertheless, he was convinced that only a strong king could bring peace to the country, and he held civil war to be the worst of evils.

He is best known for having advocated toleration as a solution to religious conflicts. He was not the only advocate of toleration, but he presented the arguments for it more completely than anyone else. He did not believe it was good for more than one religion to exist in a state; like the vast majority of his contemporaries, he strongly favored religious unity. Under the prevailing circumstances, however, he saw toleration as a necessity, and persecution as worse than useless, threatening great evils to France if continued. He even defended the liberty of men to seek God as they wished; if liberty did not include religion, he claimed, then both the word liberty and the thing itself were perverted. In defending toleration, he denied one of the most widely held beliefs of the age: The ruler has the duty

of establishing true religion and repressing heresy. It is the king's duty, he said, to maintain peace and to do justice, and he is not bound to any party or group, but stands above all particular interests.

During the civil wars, political theories developed in response to the circumstances of the conflict. Both sides, Catholic and Huguenot, evolved their own distinctive doctrines. The Huguenots, being Calvinists, had originally subscribed to Calvin's political ideas. In 1559 they held a synod in Paris, which produced a confession of faith that asserted the duty of obedience even to an "unfaithful" ruler. Their first protests against the actions of the government, which began soon afterwards, were directed not against the crown, but against the Guises. When the civil wars broke out in 1562, the Huguenots asserted that they were fighting for the king against the Guises, claimed their complete loyalty to him, and denied that they were rebels or that they had any right to rebel.

Within a few years, this argument became untenable, since it was now obvious that they were indeed fighting the king. Therefore, from 1567 to 1570 they adopted a new line and claimed to be fighting against despotism and on behalf of the ancient laws and liberties of France. There also appeared in these years the idea, destined to become very important, of a reciprocal obligation between ruler and subjects. The king must live up to his end of the bargain in order to receive obedience. This idea, implied at the time rather than expressed, pointed to the contract theory.

The crystallization and definite expression of such ideas was hastened by the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572, which intensified the Huguenots' will to resist and brought to the fore theories suggested earlier. The most important French political writings of the century now began to appear.

One of them was the *Francogallia* by the distinguished Huguenot jurist Franois Hotman, published in 1573 at Geneva, where the author had taken refuge after a narrow escape from death in the preceding year. This book attempted to prove, on the basis of Hotman's interpretation of French history, that the people had normally been sovereign and had expressed their sovereignty through a national representative body. Though this was an inaccurate reading of the history of France, the underlying ideas expressed by Hotman were widely repeated by Huguenot writers: the sovereignty of the people, the conditional authority of the king, and the existence of an ancient constitution of France.

Even Theodore Beza, devoted follower and successor of Calvin, found himself compelled by events to contradict the master's teaching on political obedience. In a work probably written by him, the *Right of Magistrates* (1574), he expressed the view that rulers exist for the good of the people and owe their authority to the people's consent. This authority is a limited one, and having been granted by the people, can be withdrawn by them.

The best known work of Huguenot political theory is the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos* (1579), which has been attributed to Philippe du Plessis-Mornay, although the attribution is not certain. Mornay was a French nobleman, who was for many years a close adviser of Henry of Navarre, later to be Henry IV. This famous book deals with the question of the right of subjects to resist a ruler who attempts to violate the law of God or to oppress the church or the state. To solve the problem, the author invokes two contracts. First there is a contract between God on the one hand and the king and people on the other, by which the community becomes a church, obligated to offer true worship. The second contract is between the people and the king, by which the king is obligated to rule well and the people agree to obey as long as the king lives up to his obligation. As a result of the first contract, the people are responsible to God for the king's support of true religion. If he defaults on that obligation, the people can take measures to ensure purity of worship, which means that a heretical king can be deposed.

To resist a king who violates the law of God or who lays waste the church is a duty; if the people do not do this, they are equally liable with the king to divine punishment. It is also lawful to resist a tyrant prince who is oppressing or destroying a state. A tyrant who has usurped the throne without legal right may be resisted by a private citizen; a lawful king who has become a tyrant, however, may be resisted only by the whole people acting through their leaders, the magistrates, nobles, and so forth. In this sense the spirit of the *Vindiciae* tends to be aristocratic.

Even neighboring princes are bound to aid the subjects of other princes when these subjects are persecuted for adhering to the true religion or are oppressed by tyranny. There is only one church, the Church Universal, and Christian princes must look after its welfare not only in their own dominions but everywhere. As for tyranny, a tyrant is the common enemy of mankind.

These theories of the right of resistance and of the popular origin of sovereignty, which were characteristic of the Huguenots as a revolutionary party, were hastily abandoned when the leader of their faction became king of France. Similarly, the political thinking of the militant Catholic party, the League, illustrates the close connection between political thought and the conditions in which it is formulated. From the foundation of the League in 1576, it refused to recognize any theory of government that placed unlimited power in the hands of the king or that accepted the doctrine of nonresistance. Particularly in its early years, the League tended to attribute sovereignty, or a share of it, to the estates. This was most true from 1576 to 1585, when the League was dominated by nobles; in this period, League political thinking centered on ideas of a constitution. After 1585 it fell into the hands of the towns, and more radical theories developed.

Basic to the outlook of the League was the principle that there can be no real unity in a state without agreement in religion. The most fundamental law of the French monarchy, it was held, was that the king must be a Catholic. There was some talk of a contract between

king and people, and it was agreed that a heretic king should be deposed. The writers of the League tended to stress the sovereignty of the people; their political theories were more democratic than those of the Huguenots. Sometimes they emphasized the power of the pope, but for the most part they did not accept the extreme assertions of papal power that were put forth by the Jesuits.

One result of the civil wars was the increasingly widespread acceptance of the theory of the divine right of kings: the king's authority had been bestowed directly by God rather than delegated by the people. It followed that the king was responsible only to God, not to any earthly authority, and that he could not be resisted. Indeed, to resist the king was tantamount to resisting God. The king was the source of law, not bound by it. While he might choose to consult others, he was in no way obligated to abide by anyone's opinion except his own. The suffering caused by the civil wars and the threatened disintegration of France itself drove many to the conclusion that the salvation of the country depended primarily on a strong monarch with virtually unlimited powers, to whom Frenchmen would give unquestioned obedience. This theory became especially persuasive after the assassination of Henry III in 1589, when the national crisis reached its most desperate stage. Hitherto even supporters of the royal power thought in terms of a monarch who should be limited in one way or another. After this date, all ideas of limited royal power tended to disappear.

The Politiques a name given to the party by its enemies put the interests of France above the claims of religious unity. It came to the conclusion that religious unity in France was not only impossible, but also not even necessary. The state could flourish with two recognized religions. This idea, radical for the time, led to another equally radical idea of religious toleration. The Politiques were Gallican in their attitude toward the papacy. They denied that the pope had any right to interfere in French politics or to tamper with the succession to the throne. Even in spiritual matters, the pope's authority in France was limited by the powers of the king.

By the end of the sixteenth century, the divine right theory had come to prevail in France. In its conviction that the disorders of the country could only be cured by a strong monarch, it may well have been substantially correct. It must also be noted that, even in this theory, kings were not regarded as completely without restraint. Kings were considered to be responsible to God, and this was a real responsibility in the sixteenth century. The more recent idea, that the state is the source of morality and constitutes the highest value, would have been regarded as idolatry by most thinkers of the period.

The most important French political thinker of the sixteenth century was Jean Bodin (1530-96). This remarkable man had a very active career; he was a lawyer and a teacher of law, and was prominent in public life. He was a deputy of the Third Estate at the Estates-General of Blois in 1576. For many years he served the duke of Anjou until the latter's death in 1584, and accompanied the duke on trips to England and the Netherlands.

Though his opinions came closest to those of the Politiques, he found it convenient in 1588 to join the League, which had come into control of Laon, where Bodin was living. By 1593, when it had become safe to repudiate the League, he did so.

His writings cover a variety of topics. He wrote about law and about economics; he was one of the first to see the connection between the rise of prices and the state of the money supply. He made the point that the relations between states were governed largely by economic factors. He wrote a book to uphold the reality of sorcery and witchcraft against those who doubted such things, and he wrote another work that attempted to explain the entire universe. One of his most extraordinary productions was his *Heptaplomeres*, which did not appear in its complete form until 1857. It attacked orthodox Christianity and advocated religious toleration. Bodin was originally Catholic, and for a while was apparently a Calvinist, but in this book he attacked both Catholicism and Calvinism and even Judaism, although he did accept the Old Testament as sacred. He rejected the New Testament and also atheism, finding truth in all religions. Though not a Christian, he was a very religious man. God's eternal laws regulate all that exists, and one approach to the knowledge of God is to study the history of the state, which is a manifestation of the divine will.

In his *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History* (1566) Bodin showed that he considered the study of history to be the key to the solution of political problems. The chief use of historical study is political; it helps us to understand the state. The study of history is primarily the study of law, and he called for a study of comparative law, conducted with reference to the eternal laws of nature. He also emphasized the importance of the permanent factors that play a large part in determining human history, such as geography and climate.

His political views are developed in *Six Books of the Republic* (1576). Here he declares that the state's purpose is exalted, going beyond the mere satisfaction of basic needs. It is the realization of all good for mind and body. Although the state concerns itself with economic matters, defense, and justice, the chief end of every commonwealth ought to be virtue. Not every state recognizes this end, but the well-ordered one always does. What makes a state, whether well-ordered or not, is the sovereign power. The concept of sovereignty probably was Bodin's most distinctive contribution to political thought.

He defines sovereignty as absolute and perpetual power in a commonwealth. It must be absolute and perpetual, because if anyone could limit it, the person or persons imposing the limitation would be the true sovereign, and the supposed sovereign only a nominal one. The power of government does not rest on the consent of the governed; it is derived from God. The sovereign is, therefore, characterized by power, the right to command. This is an original conception of Bodin's, and marks a deviation from the traditional view that the king was primarily the embodiment of justice. The chief attribute of sovereignty is

the right to make law. The sovereign also has the sole right of making war and peace and of concluding alliances. He alone makes all appointments to public office. He is the source of all jurisdiction, the final resort of appeal.

The obligation of subjects to their sovereign is the primary one, superseding all others. Bodin denied all right of rebellion. Since justice is no longer the primary attribute of a ruler, obedience does not depend upon the character of government, but must be unconditional. Even tyrants must be obeyed. Yet Bodin was not a proponent of unrestricted, arbitrary authority for any man. The sovereign is responsible to God, subject to divine and natural law; it is his duty to make his laws conform to the law of God.

Consultation is not obligatory for the sovereign, but is highly desirable. Bodin recommends a "senate," or advisory council, and a body of estates for communication between sovereign and subjects. Magistrates are indispensable. Because the sovereign cannot be everywhere, it is the magistrates who make possible the regular functioning of the government.

Bodin distinguishes three forms of government: monarchy, the rule of a single individual; aristocracy, the rule of the minority; and democracy, the rule of the majority. He rejected a mixed constitution, embodying elements of more than one of these forms, because he said that sovereignty, being absolute, cannot be divided. His own preference was for monarchy, since sovereignty involved command, and commands must proceed from a single will. The monarch, moreover, can consult the wisest of his subjects and benefit from their advice, whereas in democracies the majority prevails, and this does not make for wise decisions. In aristocracies there is constant danger of dissension, both between the governing class and the governed, and also within the governing class.

His great concern was to discover the conditions of political stability, and he felt that it was best provided by a monarchy governed democratically. In such a state the king consults the estates, and all subjects are eligible for office. However, forms of government are not simply the result of free choice, but depend largely on external factors beyond human control. These factors are both physical, included under the concept of climate, and astrological; the movements of the stars are the causes of changes on earth. He, therefore, regarded history as cyclical, reflecting the recurrent motions of the heavens. But men are not at the mercy of some irresistible necessity; the will is free, and men may at least make the best of situations they did not create and cannot change.

In the concept of climate as a factor in political organization, Bodin anticipates the well-known views of Montesquieu. Bodin divided the world into three climatic zones, from north to south. The northern people are strong, turbulent, and stupid. Those in the South are feeble and disinclined to action, but subtle and contemplative. In the middle zone, which includes France, they combine the best qualities of North and South. To be good,

government must be adapted to the particular character of the people involved. Northern peoples need to be governed by force, those in the middle by justice, and southerners by religion. In the North there is a tendency toward democracy, in the middle toward monarchy, and in the South toward theocracy. When a people moves from one region to another, the region's character will inevitably change. It is only the people in the middle zone who have actually created a well-ordered state. Though monarchy is the best form of state, some people are incapable of grasping this; therefore, it would be inappropriate for them. At the same time, Bodin saw the dangers inherent in hereditary monarchy; he realized the corrupting effects of power, and he said that virtuous princes are few.

Bodin had great respect for the inviolability of property. The sovereign cannot take anyone's property without consent. This means that he cannot raise direct taxes without the consent of the estates. Bodin believed in taxes only as a last resort, when all other means of raising money have failed. Under normal conditions, taxation amounts to robbery. This may be seen as a limitation on the sovereign, but it may be looked at another way. For Bodin the family was the foundation of the state. Since property was tied to the family, any interference with property rights by the sovereign would carry the risk of destroying the state. Thus to deny the sovereign the right to destroy the state would not be a limitation on sovereignty, but would rather preserve the reason for its existence.

In a sense, Bodin accepted the idea of religious toleration, but on the basis of expediency rather than on principle. He saw religion as the chief basis of social order, somewhat in the manner of Machiavelli, though he did not favor any particular religion. Therefore, the government must make sure that there is no disputing about religion. If, however, there is a large dissenting group, no attempt should be made to suppress it by force. Religious diversity is at least better than civil war.

In the case of his own country, he attributed the civil wars to the wealth of the church; religion was just the "veil." In his discussion of the causes of revolutions, he gave the chief weight to inequality and in particular to great inequalities of wealth. He did mention other causes, such as the action of the stars and efforts to change the law. Although such changes are inevitable and necessary, they carry great danger, because people dislike anything new. Yet Bodin saw change everywhere in human affairs. Though he searched for stability, he was convinced that it did not exist in the world.

THE JESUITS

The Jesuits made significant contributions to political thought but their ideas worked in two directions. On the one hand, as defenders of papal authority, some of them exalted the power of the pope in political matters, thereby giving offense to both Protestants and Catholics. On the other hand, these Jesuit writers were generally Spaniards, and their patriotic feeling caused them to uphold the rights and independence of sovereign states. In

some ways they looked back to the medieval papacy; in other ways they pointed to the merging society of nations.

An influential statement of the papal position was set forth by the famous Italian Jesuit, Robert Bellarmine, in a number of works published between 1586 and 1610. According to him, the pope has received from Christ the oversight of Christendom, and this gives him certain powers in connection with secular states. Bellarmine regarded this power as indirect. As a result one of his books was put on the Index as not containing a strong enough statement of papal authority. It was strong enough, however, to be condemned by the Parlement of Paris and to arouse the wrath of James I of England. Bellarmine disavowed any claim of purely temporal authority for the pope; it was his right, however, to see to it that men were not subjected to any temporal government that interfered with their spiritual welfare or that endangered their salvation. He might intervene to nullify any law that threatens men's souls, and in the interest of men's spiritual welfare he might depose monarchs.

While the pope's power derives directly from God, according to Bellarmine, civil authority has a secular origin. It is based on man's worldly nature and needs and serves worldly ends. The ruler is a delegate of the community and receives authority from his subjects; this authority is conditional and limited.

This conception of the people or the community as the source of political power was characteristic of the Jesuits in general. This enabled them to combat the idea of absolute monarchical power in the name of the authority of the pope. Luis de Molina, Spanish Jesuit theologian, claimed that the sovereign people had the right to depose its rulers, or delegates.

That authority originates in the community and is granted only conditionally was also asserted by the most original Jesuit political writer of the sixteenth century, Juan de Mariana, whose *De rege et regis institutione* was published in 1598. Unlike most other Jesuits, he does not seem to have believed in the traditional idea of the Christian commonwealth under the spiritual authority of the pope. He thought in terms of the national state, and in the *De rege* does not often refer to the pope. He was interested in the nature and origin of the state, and believed that before the state existed, men lived in an actual state of nature without law or government. Men's needs and wants drove them to form societies, which arose from groupings of families. The family, for him as for Bodin, was the natural human unit.

The first kind of government that evolved after men had formed societies was monarchy without limitations; but this did not work, and eventually the monarch was placed under the law. The community reserved for itself the powers of legislation and taxation, and these can be exercised only through a representative assembly. This assembly is the

highest authority in the state. This leads to his famous doctrine of tyrannicide. The initiative belonged with the representative assembly, which could decide whether the ruler had overstepped his authority and become a tyrant. If it was so decided, then anyone, even a private citizen, had the right to kill. Though the doctrine of tyrannicide was not new, this assertion of an unlimited right to commit the act was an extreme statement and hurt his reputation. His justification of the assassination of Henry III of France caused the Parlement of Paris to burn the book.

On the subject of religion, he believed that unity of religion in a state is necessary for peace, but surprisingly for a Jesuit, he did not insist that there was only one religion that ought to be established. He did not think of the state as theocratic. Its existence was justified by the needs it met in man's nature, and it did not require a special divine sanction. Thus this Jesuit writer provides a theoretical basis for the modern secular state. As a matter of fact, even those Jesuits who emphasized papal supremacy were moving, perhaps unwittingly, in the same direction by seeing civil authority as purely human, in contrast to the divine authority of the church. From this it was not far to the conclusion that the state has rights of its own independent of ecclesiastical sanction.

The Jesuits also made a contribution to the emergence of the idea of international law, partly by their recognition of the state as an independent entity and partly by their insistence on the law of nature binding on all men and nations. Like so many other men and forces in the period, they helped to usher in a new age even as they clung to some of the ideals of the past.

BOTERO

Giovanni Botero had an active career as a priest, secretary to Charles Borromeo, and diplomat and tutor in the service of the duke of Savoy. Two of his best known works are *On the Reason of State* (1589) and *On the Causes of the Greatness of Cities* (1588). While he proclaimed himself an opponent of Machiavelli's views, in some ways he follows his great predecessor. He speaks, however, for the Counter Reformation. While he emphasizes the importance of religion in a state, as Machiavelli had done, he accepts the value of Catholicism only. True reason of state is obedience to the pope; rulers who have refused this obedience have suffered for it. Papal power he regarded as virtually unlimited, even in the political sphere.

His most original idea, found particularly in *On the Causes of the Greatness of Cities*, is his emphasis on the importance of economic factors. Cities grow as the result of the economic activities for which they provide opportunities. The strength of a government depends on prosperity. The basic factor in the production of wealth is labor, and idleness is a curse.

He regarded war as an unmitigated evil, and found its cause in the division of the world into numerous states. This division ought, therefore, to be done away with by a universal monarchy, which, among its other benefits, would end war and famine and bring happiness to mankind. To Botero, the national states that had come to dominate political life were the causes of so many evils; the only way to cope with them was to get rid of them entirely.

CONCLUSION

From this brief summary it becomes clear that the sixteenth century occupies a distinct place in the history of political thought. It is true that the problems discussed were often the same ones that had occupied political thinkers for centuries, and that many well-worn ideas were put forth in the attempt to solve these problems. This accounts for the repetition of certain ideas throughout this chapter. Yet something new has come into the picture: All of the discussion now takes place against the background of the national state and its distinctive character, needs, and demands. This is actually true even of Machiavelli and Guicciardini, though they were largely concerned with the Italian city-states. Henceforth, political thought, like political action, must start from the nation if it is to have any relevance to actual human existence. In this way, as in many others, the nation-state shows itself to be one of the dominant forces, for better or worse, in the life of the postmedieval world.



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CHAPTER 22

RENAISSANCE ART IN NORTHERN EUROPE

Northern Renaissance art is by no means to be considered an appendage to Italian art. As in literature, Italian influence was strong, and some of the greatest of the northern artists were profoundly affected by their own trips to Italy; Drer and Bruegel are good examples. At the same time, the vigorous indigenous traditions of northern art continued to find expression, so that the art of the northern Renaissance manifested a distinct synthesis of native and Italian elements. In fact, the traditions of the North had their own reciprocal influence on Italian art. In particular, the technique of painting in oil, developed in Flanders, was widely adopted in Italy and elsewhere.

In general, northern art continued to carry on the late medieval tradition of great attention to detail. The Italian influence helped to modify this emphasis in the direction of greater simplicity and subordination of less essential features to the main theme. Other contributions of the art of the North were a tendency toward realism and naturalism, great skill in portraiture, and an interest in landscape.

All of this can be seen clearly in the great flowering of Flemish art in the fourteenth and particularly the fifteenth centuries. It was a part of the splendor and vitality of the civilization of the Low Countries in this period, stimulated by the brilliant court of the dukes of Burgundy. The sculptor Claus Sluter (d.1405/6) broke away from the delicacy and artificiality of current Italian models, and gave his figures massiveness and monumental grandeur, which are sometimes combined with extraordinary suppleness and grace. Sluter also achieved great naturalism and emotional power, as shown in the illustration on page 436 of the Madonna on the trumeau, portal of the Chartreuse de Champol.

One of the founders of Flemish painting in the fifteenth century was the so-called Master of Flmalle who is often identified with Robert Campin (c.1378 1444). His realism is shown in his careful attention to detail, as in the Mrode Altarpiece. Here the central panel, depicting the Annunciation (Illustration page 422) contains many genre touches of a domestic interior, and one of the side panels shows St. Joseph as a carpenter with the tools

of his craft scattered about on his workbench. His paintings reveal a special talent for landscape, sometimes shown in the background through an open window. His preoccupation with the representation of spatial depth and perspective is another facet of his realism. In some of his depictions of the Passion and the events surrounding it, he conveys intense emotion.

Campin's art has been referred to as middle class. More courtly and aristocratic was the work of Jan van Eyck (c.1395 1441), the other founder of the school of Flemish realism. In some of his work, Van Eyck had as a collaborator his brother Hubert, a rather shadowy figure whose very existence has sometimes been questioned. From 1425 to the end of his life, Jan van Eyck was court painter to the duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, who also employed him on diplomatic missions.

One of the great masterpieces of the Van Eycks is the Adoration of the Lamb in the Ghent Cathedral. (Illustration page 437) Dated 1432, it is a most complex and elaborate work, with folding wings painted both on the inside and on the outside. The main part is the scene that gives it its title and shows vast numbers of pilgrims in a magnificent landscape, adoring the Lamb. The work makes a great impression of splendor, magnificence, and religious devotion, all heightened by the loving and meticulous detail of flowers, jewels, and other elements. The figures of donors, saints, Adam and Eve, and others are carried out with great psychological skill and variety. An inscription on the frame attributes it to both Hubert and Jan. It has been suggested that Hubert, the older brother, worked out the overall plan and contributed an element of poetry and mysticism, while Jan supplied the realism found in the detail and the psychological aspects.

Annunciation, Mrode Altarpiece by Master of Flmalle (Robert Campin?) Bulloz

Van Eyck's signed painting of the Arnolfini Wedding Portrait (1434), is now in the National Gallery in London. (Illustration page 438) It shows his mastery of portraiture, his loving interest in detail, and the jeweled splendor of his colors. It also reveals a mastery of spatial composition. Some of his individual portraits are masterpieces, and his skill in landscape is everywhere apparent, as in the background of the Madonna with Chancellor Nicolas Rolin in the Louvre.

Van Eyck was much less emotional than Campin. His work has been described as classical and humanistic. His calm vision was much closer to Italy than to the more emotional and mystical temperament of northern Europe.

Rogier van der Weyden (c.1399 1464) may have been trained in the workshop of Campin. He was painter to the city of Brussels, and was also patronized by the Burgundian court. His most famous work is an altarpiece now in the Prado Gallery in Madrid and called the Escorial Deposition. (Illustration page 439) It shares many of the characteristics of the

work of the Master of Flmalle, including realistic representation of details and great emotional force. The grief of those who are present at the deposition of Jesus from the Cross is strikingly shown. These effects are heightened by the glowing colors and richness of textures that are so conspicuous in Flemish art, and that were made possible by the use of the medium of oil.

In the Deposition the space is enclosed and occupied chiefly by the human figures. Elsewhere in the work one sees other Flemish touches the landscape, sometimes shown through an open window, the naturalistic genre details of domestic interiors. But in his human and emotional appeal, Rogier differs from Jan van Eyck and greatly influenced later Flemish painters.

He is one of the greatest of all portrait painters. His paintings of the last two Burgundian dukes, Philip the Good and Charles the Bold, bring these fifteenth-century figures vividly before us. (Illustration page 440) His portraits are illumined by his human sympathies, and many later artists tried to capture this in their work, without ever equaling his achievement.

Hans Memling (d. 1494) seldom rises to the heights of Rogier, of whom he was a follower, but he was tremendously popular. In some of his portraits he achieves greatness, and he is outstanding as a landscape artist. Otherwise his art lacks the grandeur and depth of Rogier's. Its cheerfulness and decorative charm, however, proved very popular and he became one of the richest men in Bruges.

These artists represent only a very few of the outstanding Netherlandish masters. Later in this chapter we will return to the work of two of their greatest successors, Bosch and Bruegel.

FRANCE

Although reciprocal cultural influences had long flowed back and forth between France and Italy, a new phase of Italian influence in France opened with the French invasions of the peninsula that began in 1494. Starting with Charles VIII, the French kings brought Italian artists home with them and put them to work. The most important of the royal patrons was Francis I, whose active encouragement of humanistic learning has been mentioned. Among the artists who came to France at his invitation were Leonardo da Vinci and Andrea del Sarto. Francis also collected paintings by great Italian masters, such as Titian, Raphael, and Michelangelo.

None of these artists or works, however, had a decisive impact on French art through the work they did in France. More important were Giovanni Battista di Jacopo, known as Rosso Fiorentino (1495 1540), Francesco Primaticcio (1504 70), who long outlived Francis, and Sebastiano Serlio (1475 1554).

Rosso and Primaticcio, who arrived in the early 1530s, were the first two Italian artists of any stature who did a substantial amount of work in France. The most important evidence of their work is found at the Palace of Fontainebleau, where Francis I had been carrying out a remodeling project since 1528. Here the two Italian artists worked out a novel scheme of decoration, combining painting with stucco sculpture in full relief. Recurrent motifs include the use of fruit, flowers, and the female nude. The effect is rich and elaborate. Instead of being subordinate to the architectural framework, the decoration tends to overshadow and obscure it. The work of the "School of Fontainebleau" had great influence throughout Europe.

After the death of Rosso in 1540, Primaticcio continued to work in the palace of Fontainebleau. Here he evolved a style of figure drawing that was to become standard in France and to be adopted in other countries: slim, elongated figures, often nudes, in easy and elegant poses. In his later years, Primaticcio did some architectural work, and among other projects, designed the tomb of Henry II.

A younger Italian artist, Niccolò dell'Abbate (c.1512-71), collaborated with Primaticcio in the Fontainebleau decorations, adding a special skill in illusionism, which he had learned in Italy. He also had a great importance in the field of landscape painting. The panoramic landscape, with its fantastic character, its distant views, its dreamlike mood, influenced by both Italian and Flemish models, was introduced into France by him.

Unlike painting, which had declined in France by the beginning of the sixteenth century, architecture had continued to flourish. Though there was French interest in Italian architecture before the invasions, it was these invasions that provided the decisive stimulus. This came especially through the French occupation of Milan. Milanese architecture emphasized very elaborate decoration, in contrast to the more severe style of Florence. This highly decorative style appealed to the French, and was copied by them. The Certosa of Pavia, which was located in Milanese territory not far from the city of Milan, was the building most admired by the French. There were finer examples of Renaissance architecture being built in Milan, especially the works of the great Bramante, but they were ignored by the French.

This lack of appreciation points to the weakness of much of the work done in France under Italian influence: The artists failed to appreciate the real importance of Italian art and copied only its superficial qualities. In some cases, the Italian artists who worked in France were inferior talents who, nevertheless, had great influence. One of these was Serlio, whom Francis I brought from Italy in 1540 or 1541. A great patron of architecture, Francis built many of the magnificent castles, which are still seen. By the time Serlio arrived, the French could appreciate the real achievements of the Italian Renaissance.

Deposition by Germain Pilon Alinari/Art Resource

Thus there was a great age of French architecture from about 1540, in which the Italian elements were assimilated, and a truly French architecture was produced. In this development, Serlio had an influence out of proportion to his ability, which was not outstanding in comparison to either the best Italian or the best French architects of the time.

Serlio's influence in France came through the buildings he planned or built he built only two and especially through his architectural treatise. However, he lacked the ability to create a style, and what other architects got from his book were individual elements, rather than a coherent whole. Still, he was an important source of Italian ideas in France.

There were two French architects working in the middle of the sixteenth century who were men of genius, Pierre Lescot (c.1515-78) and Philibert de l'Orme (d.1570). Lescot is best known for his work in rebuilding the square court (Cour Carrée) of the Louvre, a great royal palace in Paris. He began this late in the reign of Francis I. Lescot's work here was classical but non-Italian; it had more decoration and greater variety than the best Italian work of the time. Thus he created a style that is at once French and classical.

Philibert de l'Orme, the greatest French architect of the period, studied in Rome from 1533 to 1536. A few years after his return to France, he came to the attention of the dauphin and Diane de Poitiers, the dauphin's mistress. When the dauphin became King Henry II in 1547, de l'Orme received the post of superintendent of buildings. After Henry's death in 1559, he lost his position and apparently suffered some mistreatment, having caused great offense by his arrogance during his time of power. Later he was restored to favor by Catherine de' Medici, who gave him important commissions. He also wrote two books on architectural subjects.

His attitude toward both the classical and Italian styles was conditioned by his strong French patriotism. He was opposed to those who followed blindly either of those models; he believed in being guided by reason, practical experience, and a sense of the appropriate.

At the same time, de l'Orme understood classical architecture and knew how to adapt it to his use without sacrificing his own individuality. The result is an architecture that can be called classical without being a mere copy, and that is still French. He also was able to give to his work a monumental character previously unattained in France in this period.

The architects often worked in close collaboration with the sculptors. In the field of sculpture, Italian influence appeared in the person of Benvenuto Cellini, who worked in France from 1540 to 1545. Among the artists he influenced was the great French sculptor, Jean Goujon (16th century). Though he probably studied classical art in Italy and used Italian ideas in his work, he evolved a distinctive style, which was followed widely in

France. The exquisite grace of his figures is illustrated by the reliefs of nymphs shown on page 441.

The greatest sculptor of the later years of the century was Germain Pilon (c.1525-90). He was not influenced by Goujon, but in his earlier works he shows the influence of Primaticcio. As time went on, he developed a highly personal style. The Deposition, a bronze relief, (Illustration page 425) shows the flowing quality of his later style, as well as his use of naturalistic details, even harsh ones, to achieve emotional effect.

To turn briefly to the field of painting, we may note two masters of portraiture, the Clouets, father and son. Jean Clouet (dead by 1541) was actually not a native of France. He may have been born in Brussels, though it is not certain, and he never became a French citizen. From 1516 he is known to have worked in the service of the French crown. Though he was not exclusively a portrait painter, his portraits are notable for their keen observation of character, (Illustration page 442) as in the portrait of Francis I.

In 1541, after his father's death, François Clouet (d. 1572) was appointed by Francis I to be his father's successor. To him we owe portraits of many of the members of the French court, including some of the kings.

Both Clouets show Italian influences, but these had been assimilated and subordinated to a native French tradition. So the Italian impact on French art in general, though it was not at first understood and for a while produced some clumsy imitations, was eventually digested and helped to form what was essentially a new, distinctly French style.

GERMANY

The political and religious situation of sixteenth-century Germany had an influence on art. The political disunity and weakness of the empire meant that there was no single artistic center with as deep an influence as the royal court in France though the emperors generally had artistic interests and were active patrons. Thus there were a number of places where important work was being done, with local variations in style and tradition.

The religious troubles of the Reformation also discouraged artistic enterprise. Artists, like other people, sometimes had to change their place of residence to escape persecution. There were fewer patrons, and those who were still commissioning works of art turned to smaller pieces and away from large and monumental works.

In spite of such handicaps, much work was done, and some important artists were produced in sixteenth-century Germany. Three of the greatest may be discussed here: Cranach, "Grnewald," and Dürer, all of them born within a few years of one another.

Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472 1553) was court painter at Wittenberg from 1505 to the end of his life. To him we owe perhaps the best portraits of Martin Luther, one of which is reproduced here. (Illustration page 443) His many portraits show penetrating insight into the subjects' thoughts and emotions. He is also remarkable for his feeling for nature: his keen and loving observation of natural detail, his deep emotional response to the grandeur and beauty of sky and trees. Some of his portraits are set in the open air, and in these he matches the natural setting to the mood and temperament of the sitter.

Mathis Gothart-Neithart known as "Grnewald" (c.1480 1528) worked for a while in the service of Albrecht of Brandenburg, archbishop of Mainz, who has been discussed in connection with Luther. However, the artist eventually adopted Lutheran views, and may have been involved in the Peasants' War on the side of the peasants. In addition to painting, he was employed during his career on various projects that required engineering skill; he knew something about medicine as well.

Grnewald is one of the greatest of German artists; his genius finds expression in the depiction of intense emotion, especially painful emotion. This is shown in his best-known work, the paintings on the altarpiece for a chapel in a monastery at Isenheim. The Crucifixion (See next page) that he painted here does not spare the beholder. Grnewald relentlessly brings out all the marks of terrible suffering and agony, induced by the cruelty and torture of the executioners. The faithful figures at the foot of the cross express unbearable grief. There are few if any great paintings that convey so vividly a sense of horror and pain. The painting is Gothic rather than Renaissance in composition and structure.

Crucifixion, Isenheim Altarpiece by Matthias Grnewald Bulloz

Other works of Grnewald convey the same sense of suffering and grief, for example, a painting of the mocking of Christ. He often manages to convey an unearthly, supernatural atmosphere, in keeping with the fevered, overwrought emotional atmosphere that can be found in early sixteenth-century Germany. Though some of his paintings show the influence of Italian Renaissance works, Grnewald remained strongly medieval in outlook and technique.

The sense of balance and measure, the Renaissance concept of human dignity that is lacking in Grnewald, can be found in the work of Albrecht Drer (1471 1528), the greatest of German artists. He is associated primarily with the city of Nuremberg, one of the leading cultural and intellectual centers of Germany. The famous Nuremberg patrician, civic leader, and humanist, Willibald Pirckheimer, was a close friend of Drer. The artist has left two portraits of him, executed at different times.

Italy was very important in Drer's development and in the history of north European art in

general. Before Drer's first Italian trip, which took place in 1494-95, the art of the Renaissance in Italy had had little effect in the North. "Drer's first trip to Italy, brief though it was, may be called the beginning of the Renaissance in the Northern Countries."¹⁶ Drer came back from Italy full of desire for German artists to participate in the "regrowth" of the arts that had been brought about by the Italians. Here is another clear witness to the fact that many of the leading men of the period were imbued with the idea that a rebirth, revival, or renewal was going on in their own day.

Drer went to Italy again from 1505 until the beginning of 1507, saw the superior social position and learning of Italian artists compared to Germans, and began to acquire for himself the new humanistic learning. Because he was a scholar as well as an artist, he was patronized from 1512 onward by the emperor Maximilian I. (Illustration page 444) He was also a scientist, with an all-inclusive interest in nature. In addition to his artistic work, he wrote books on geometry, fortifications, and human proportions.

Drer was able to capture the authentic classical spirit in his art, even though he had little contact with the original works, but had to approach them through Italian prints and drawings. Under these conditions, Erwin Panofsky thinks this achievement "almost a miracle."¹⁷

The self-conscious individualism of the Renaissance, together with its conception of human nobility and dignity, can be seen in Drer's self-portraits. No previous artist had used himself so frequently as the subject of his works. Furthermore, Drer's portraits of himself are not found simply in group paintings, as was often the case with other Renaissance artists who used this device as a sort of signature, but were also independent studies. These self-portraits correspond in their own special field to Montaigne's intense and prolonged interest in exploring himself.

The most remarkable of these self-portraits, one which has often been found shocking, was painted in 1500. (Illustration page 445) It represents Drer himself in such a way that it also appears to be a picture of Jesus. This has seemed blasphemous to many viewers, and yet there was no irreverence in Drer. On the contrary, his life and work show him to have been a deeply religious man. Panofsky's solution to this mystery is, briefly, that such identification was less strange at that time than it would be now, and also that for Drer the work demonstrates humility rather than vainglory. It indicates that the artist must humbly strive for the divine creative gift.¹⁸

Drer's numerous other portraits are remarkable for technical skill and penetrating observation. He was also a master of landscape, and in keeping with his scientific character, a keen and loving portrayer of animals. Drer was not only a painter, but also an engraver and a designer of woodcuts. His reputation was, in fact, greater for his work in these fields than for his paintings. Among his best works in woodcuts were several series

he did illustrating the Apocalypse and the Passion.

Among Drer's numerous engravings, he produced in 1513 and 1514 the three which are the most famous: Knight, Death, and the Devil; St. Jerome in His Study; and Melencolia I. (Illustration page 446) These three represent respectively three ways of life: the moral, theological, and intellectual. All are of very great importance, but in the brief space we have, we shall choose the Melencolia for discussion. Melancholy is represented by a large winged female figure sitting disconsolately on the ground, surrounded by the instruments and symbols of the arts, both liberal and mechanical. She seems to express the futility and hopelessness of human knowledge, especially theoretical knowledge divorced from practice. She may also symbolize the artist's own mental state a longing for a perfection of knowledge which he knows he can never attain.

A critical change in Drer's life, which strongly affected his art, was his conversion in 1519 to Lutheranism. Thereafter he concentrated chiefly on religious subjects, and adopted a more austere style, which conveyed a deeper emotional expression.

Another important German artist was Hans Holbein the Younger, but so much of his work was done in England that we can discuss him in connection with that country.

ENGLAND: HOLBEIN

A number of foreign artists, many of them from the Low Countries, were active in England during the sixteenth century. The greatest of them was the German Hans Holbein the Younger (1497 1543). Holbein, born in Augsburg, came from a family of painters, including his father, the elder Hans, his uncle Sigismund, and his brother, Ambrosius. While still in his teens, he was working in Basel, where he became acquainted with Erasmus. From these years came his delightful illustrations to *The Praise of Folly*. At this early date he was already painting portraits, a field in which he was to prove one of the greatest geniuses. He painted three portraits of Erasmus by 1523; the one reproduced here (Illustration page 447) perhaps brings out better than any other the character and personality of the great humanist and scholar. He also worked for publishers, producing woodcuts to be used in their books. It is likely that he made an Italian journey.

In 1526 he went to England, with letters of introduction from Erasmus to William Warham, the archbishop of Canterbury, and to Sir Thomas More. This voyage to England lasted eighteen months, after which he returned to Basel. The religious disorders there, which culminated in the triumph of the Reformation in 1529, made his work difficult. He, therefore, left Basel for good in 1532, and spent the rest of his life in England. He left behind abandoned his wife and children.

In England Holbein produced the remarkable series of drawings and paintings that bring

the great figures of the reign of Henry VIII vividly before us. Henry VIII patronized him from 1536. Holbein's portraits are noteworthy, among other things, for their objectivity and detachment; he does not identify with his subjects, nor does he conceal their weaknesses.

Among native artists may be mentioned Nicholas Hilliard (1547 1619), who was a goldsmith and painter of miniatures. He was the favorite painter of Queen Elizabeth, and by royal patent received a monopoly on painting portraits of the queen.

Christ Carrying the Cross by Hieronymus Bosch Bulloz

It was architecture rather than painting or sculpture that most engaged the interests of the English, especially the upper classes. Many of the noble and wealthy had a passion for building, and some of their great houses still stand. In the reign of Henry VIII, one of the various factors that led to the downfall of Henry Howard, earl of Surrey, involved his grandiose building plans. William Cecil, Lord Burghley, built more than one great house. The redoubtable Bess of Hardwick, countess of Shrewsbury, was deeply interested in building. Hardwick Hall, designed for her by Robert Smythson in the 1590s, is an imposing structure. Like other great English houses of the period, it is still somewhat medieval in appearance. Although English builders were familiar with the writings of Continental theorists on architecture, English building was far behind the times compared to the most advanced work on the Continent.

THE LOW COUNTRIES

The great medieval artistic tradition of the Low Countries was continued in the Renaissance. Of the numerous important artists who worked there, two can be mentioned here: They are Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Bruegel the Elder, both of whom retained strong medieval elements in their work.

Bosch (c.1450 1516), a Dutchman, is one of the most fascinating and puzzling of painters, and it is impossible to decipher all the meanings in his works. Some of his paintings are fairly straightforward, and seem to reveal a distinctly pessimistic view of human nature. This is true of his many works dealing with aspects of the Passion, such as the Crowning with Thorns, the Mocking of Christ, or Christ Carrying the Cross. (Illustration page 431) In this work, we can see how the gentle, suffering face of the Savior, although placed in the center of the composition, is more or less overshadowed by the hideous, grotesque faces of his persecutors.

Bosch had a wild and lurid imagination, which in some of his works expresses itself in all sorts of fanciful monsters and apparitions. Devils abound, as do visions of Hell, with its ghastly lurid atmosphere illuminated by flames. There seems to be a satirical and

moralistic strain in Bosch, even though his exact meaning is sometimes far from clear. He is untouched by many of the characteristics of the Italian Quattrocento, such as mathematical perspective and the careful study and representation of the human body. In his works, the human figures are flat and sketchily outlined, and perspective is ignored, although Bosch is important as a landscape painter. He departs even from the native Netherlandish tradition in not being skillful at portraiture or perhaps merely uninterested in it. On the other hand, he is often much concerned with precision of detail. Thus he is essentially a medieval artist in many ways, but there is no denying his power and artistic greatness. One of his admirers was King Philip II of Spain, an avid collector of Bosch's works.

Pieter Bruegel the Elder (c.1525-69) was referred to by some critics as a second Bosch, because many of his works do reflect Bosch's influence, but this description of him would be very incomplete. Equally misleading is the view that sees him largely as a painter of amusing scenes from peasant life. He is now regarded as one of the greatest artistic geniuses of his age, and a profoundly serious artist. Though his career was unfortunately short, he left a substantial body of paintings and drawings.

Netherlandish Proverbs by Pieter Bruegel the Elder

Though there was a tradition that he was of peasant origin, his birthplace is not known; it may have been the city of Breda. He was in Italy in 1552 and 1553. He worked for some years in Antwerp, the artistic capital of the Low Countries, and later moved to Brussels. He was in touch with a circle of Erasmian humanists who were affected by some of the advanced religious thought of the time; we should recall that the Netherlands had been the birthplace of some radical thought on religious matters. Bruegel was deeply concerned with human vice and follies, and expressed this concern in his works. Thus he was no simple peasant, but a highly sophisticated and learned man with a like-minded group of friends, and possessed of a deep moral concern. To these qualities he added great artistic power and a superb technique.

Some of his paintings are filled with figures, as the Netherlandish Proverbs, above, in which the people are acting out about a hundred current proverbs. Here Bruegel has a great opportunity to comment on human wickedness and foolishness, as did Sebastian Brant and Erasmus in their writings. In this painting, a woman is putting a blue hood over her husband, which means that she is making him a cuckold. A man is filling the well after the calf has been drowned, as we would speak of locking the barn door after the horse is stolen. A man bites a pillar, which shows that he is a hypocrite, and so on.

Throughout all his work was the same sharp observation and criticism of human weakness. His two paintings of the building of the Tower of Babel show the folly and futility of pride. The Wedding Dance and The Wedding Banquet, far from being merely

representations of merrymaking among the peasants, show the effects of lust and gluttony respectively. In his great painting of *The Parable of the Blind* we see all men as lost, hopeless and without good leadership.

The inexhaustible interest in Bruegel's works is partly due to the richness and precision of his detail; there is always something more to see. He was also a master of landscape and one of the great figures in the development of that field of painting. He was not a portraitist, but this was not his intent. The people in his paintings often have round, blank, heavy faces, expressionless, mindless, sometimes malicious; they are types rather than individuals, and their purpose is to convey a message.

SPAIN

Patronage of artists and collections of works of art was a characteristic of the Hapsburgs, and of none more so than Philip II. In the midst of the arduous labors of governing his vast dominions, he found time to build an important library, supervise the construction of the great palace of the Escorial, collect works of art, and patronize artists. We have mentioned his interest in buying the works of Bosch. He continued the patronage of Titian, which had been begun by his father, Charles V. Foreign influences, so carefully barred from the country in other fields, entered freely in the world of art, especially from Italy and Flanders. Strictly speaking, of course, these influences could not be considered altogether foreign since Italy was largely dominated by Spain in the time of Philip, and the Low Countries were a part of his dominions. Even after the revolt of the Netherlands, Flanders remained under Spanish rule.

And yet the most important Spanish artist of the period was a Greek, born on the island of Crete. Domenikos Theotokopoulos is, in fact, generally known as El Greco (1541-1614). In spite of his Greek origin and the fact that he lived and worked in Venice and Rome until he was about thirty-six, he seems to us the most Spanish of painters. He received a couple of commissions from Philip II, but the king rejected one of his paintings because it failed to please him.

One can see why. To an eye unaccustomed to his work, El Greco's art must have seemed strange. He deliberately distorts and elongates his figures, sets them often in a lurid, unearthly atmosphere, uses an agitated, flickering light, ignores the rules of perspective, and heightens the effect by areas of brilliant color. His painting is usually religious, and its effect is to express, in visions that seem to disregard the barrier between the natural and supernatural, a mystical intensity that is a fitting expression of the Spain of the Counter Reformation. (Illustration *Burial of Count Orgaz* page 448) Though he spent his last years in poverty and left great debts behind him, he has been granted the posthumous recognition that is accorded to great artists who dared to depart from the accepted usages of their age.

CONCLUSION AND CAUTION

In a book of this sort, it is possible to mention only a few of the artists and works of art of the period. This inevitable and unfortunate oversimplification must not be allowed to obscure the fact that the artistic production of Northern Europe in the sixteenth century was vast, rich, and complex. Though the changes and upheavals of the age may have produced conditions inimical to artistic development, they could not quench it.

Readers must also be careful not to try to reduce so vast a subject to a few easy generalizations. It is convenient to classify art and artists according to schools and trends, but these are, after all, nothing more than conveniences. An artist or a group of artists, a work of art or a group of works, may be called medieval, Early Renaissance, High Renaissance, Mannerist, and so forth; but each artist, each picture or statue or building is unique. One great work for example, a painting by Bruegel or an etching by Dürer can provide material for almost endless study and reflection. The study or appreciation of the work of one of the great masters can occupy a lifetime. Madonna, Portal of the Chartreuse de Champol

by Claus Sluter and Shop

Mystic Adoration the Lamb, Ghent Altarpiece

by Hubert(?) and Jan van Eyck

Arnolfini Wedding Portrait

by Jan van Eyck

Escorial Deposition

by Rogier van der Weyden

Charles the Bold

by Rogier van der Weyden

Nymphs, Fontaine des Innocents

by Jean Goujon

Francis I

by Jean Clouet

Martin Luther

by Lucas Cranach the Elder

Emperor Maximilian I

by Albrecht Dürer

Self-Portrait (1500)

by Albrecht Dürer

Melencolia I

by Albrecht Dürer

Erasmus 1523

by Hans Holbein the Younger

Burial of Count Orgaz

El Greco



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CHAPTER 23

THE BEGINNING OF THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION

The expression "the scientific revolution," a fairly recent term, is generally employed to describe the great outburst in activity in the investigation of physical nature that took place in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. At the beginning came the important books of Copernicus in astronomy and Vesalius in anatomy, both published in 1543. In 1687 the appearance of Newton's Principia provided a sort of climax for previous achievements in astronomy and physics and became the basis for future developments in those fields. Although there had been much work done in antiquity and in the Middle Ages to prepare the way for these achievements, the quality and impact of scientific discovery in Europe in this period exceeds anything ever done in any part of the world. Consequently, modern European and western civilization alone can, in fact, be called a scientific civilization. That is to say, in no other time or place outside of the modern western world has natural science had so profound and pervasive an impact on the way people live and think. We can even divide the history of western civilization into a prescientific and a scientific phase. If we accept this system of periodization, then the scientific revolution marks the point at which the change took place.

The effects of modern science have manifested themselves in various ways. In an obvious sense, the results of scientific knowledge applied in the form of technology are everywhere evident today. Over the years they have revolutionized communication and transportation and increased beyond calculation the power and wealth available to society and those who control and experience its benefits. In the present-day forms of atomic energy and computers, applied science promises or threatens further changes, which may be as far beyond our comprehension as the airplane and television would have been to the contemporaries of Luther, Erasmus, and Elizabeth I.

But these amazing developments do not encompass all the effects of science on the modern consciousness. More subtle, but probably no less important, has been the formation of a particular view of the nature of reality. We look at the world and our place in it in a different way than was possible in the prescientific period. This world view has superseded the one described in this book. It is no doubt more "correct" than the older one; that is, it can be shown to correspond more closely with observable and verifiable

facts. For example, it is no longer possible to maintain that the sun revolves about a motionless earth, or that there are four terrestrial elements: earth, air, fire, and water.

On the other hand, two words of caution may be ventured here. First of all, the so-called scientific view of the nature of things is not a complete view. It can account for only those aspects of nature that are accessible to scientific methods of observation and explanation. It is of course possible and many have drawn this conclusion to maintain that nothing is "real" or "true" except what is scientifically verifiable, and that whatever else we seem to see, know, or experience is illusory or imaginary. A more balanced outlook might be that not all truths are "scientific" truths, in the usual sense, and that there are many roads to truth. In the words of Blaise Pascal (1623-62), who among other things made distinguished contributions to science, "The heart has its reasons, which reason does not know."

In the second place, the so-called scientific view of things, widely accepted by today's lay public, may not be truly scientific after all. It may to some extent rest on unproved and unprovable assumptions, like the world view that it superseded. For this, some of the scientists themselves must share part of the responsibility. As E. A. Burt, author of *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science*, has pointed out, these scientists were often better scientists than philosophers, but their scientific prestige gave their philosophical views an undeserved authority. These views have affected the course of modern thought, but they may also in the process have misled it somewhat. This chapter will endeavor to explain to some extent how this happened.

Modern science has tended to ask of nature the question how, where the scholars of the Middle Ages asked why. For medieval thinkers it was important to know the "final cause" of a thing, that is, the purpose for which it exists; for modern science, attention has been shifted to an attempt to observe and describe its behavior, and to seek not final causes but rather physical causes. Francis Bacon distinguished the two kinds of causes in his *Advancement of Learning* (Second Book, VII, 7) by declaring that both causes are true, but one declares an intention, the other a consequence. Medieval philosophers were more interested in intentions; modern scientists are interested in consequences.

In modern science, accordingly, there has been an insistence on exact observation. No explanation of a fact or event in nature has been acceptable unless it has taken into account all of the observed data. The explanation that has accounted most simply for all the observed facts has been accepted as true. Conceivably, some other type of explanation may be better from some points of view; in modern times, only the scientific type has been acceptable. "For a scientific type of explanation to be satisfying, for it to convince us with a sense of its necessary truth, we must be in the condition of needing and desiring that type of explanation and no other." 19

This explanation has tended to be mathematical. Some of the great scientists of the sixteenth century looked to mathematics as the key to the secrets of nature. This meant that nature came to be interpreted in terms of quantities rather than qualities. What lay outside the field in which mathematics can operate came to seem, (in a word that was widely used) "secondary," irrelevant, even unreal. Thus we can see that the scientific revolution had important metaphysical implications that is, it came to influence man's conception of the nature and constitution of basic reality.

ASTRONOMY: COPERNICUS, TYCHO BRAHE, KEPLER

Among the first and most spectacular fruits of the new science was the gradual displacement of the geocentric world picture by the discoveries of a number of great astronomers. The basic outlines of this picture have already been referred to. It may be added that the known planets were Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, to which the sun and moon were added because they were both thought to revolve around the earth. All these planets moved around the earth once every twenty-four hours, and described an annual motion through the heavens, each then returning to its original place. Beyond the planets lay the stars, which because of their great distance from the earth, were not observed to make an annual motion, but only to circle the earth daily. They were, therefore, called the fixed stars.

These planetary motions were circular, as we have already observed. Each type of being had the kind of motion best suited to it. Thus, of the four earthly elements, fire and air tended to rise, while water and earth naturally fell. Each one was seeking its proper place in the order of the universe. The belief that there were several types of natural motion was an obstacle to scientific progress.

By the time of Copernicus (1473-1543), the prevailing conception of the nature of the universe had become a complex one. It had been clear from ancient times that the motions observable in the heavens could not be satisfactorily explained by the theory of the planets revolving around the earth in simple circular orbits. At some times the planets appeared to be closer to the earth than at others; they seemed to move at varying rates of speed, and even from time to time to be moving in a direction opposite to their normal one (retrograde motion). To meet these difficulties, the devices of the excentric and epicycle were called upon. The excentric meant that the center of a planet's orbit was located at some distance from the earth. Thus, although the planet still revolved around the earth, it was closer at some times than others and appeared to be moving faster.

The epicycle was a circle which the planet, in its motion, described around the larger circle which in turn went around the earth. Thus the planet had two circular motions. The larger one, which went around the earth, was called the deferent. The smaller epicycle, like the excentric circle, helped to explain apparent planetary variations in speed and

distance from the earth, as well as retrograde motion.

It was partly the complicated character of the received theory that made Copernicus dissatisfied with it. Furthermore, while studying in Italy, he became acquainted with Domenico Maria Novara (1454 1504), a distinguished Italian astronomer who rejected the Ptolemaic system. Copernicus also came under the influence of humanism and began the study of Greek while he was in Italy. He read the works of those ancient Greek astronomers who believed that the earth, not the sun, was in motion. He also came in contact with Platonic-Pythagorean thought, which conceived of the universe as basically mathematical and constituting a simple and harmonious system.

On his return to Poland, where he had been born and where he took up his career as a priest, Copernicus spent much time in astronomical study and observation. Working with the hypothesis that it is the earth that is actually in motion, he was able to introduce some simplifications into the scheme of the heavens. Since he retained the belief in circular orbits for the planets, however, it was necessary for him to retain some of the old complicating factors, such as epicycles. Throughout his life he worked on an account of his planetary system, and in 1543, the year of his death, he consented to its publication. It was given the title (Copernicus had not named it) of *Six Books Concerning the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*. It was written in Latin and is often referred to simply as the *De revolutionibus*.

Copernicus is not notable for the quantity and accuracy of his astronomical observations; in fact, all his data could have been fitted into the geocentric system. He proposed that the earth is one of the planets revolving around the sun, because this theory provided a simpler and more symmetrical mathematical way of explaining the observed facts. This criterion came to be accepted as the test of scientific theory, and had important consequences.

The theory of Copernicus did not win immediate and universal acceptance even among the learned. The greatest astronomer in the years following the publication of Copernicus's book was the Dane Tycho Brahe (1546 1601), who rejected the heliocentric system for a number of reasons. He thought the earth was too heavy to move and that the Copernican scheme of the heavens contradicted the Bible. His own theory was that the five planets revolved around the sun, with the sun and moon revolving about the earth.

Nevertheless, the work of Tycho Brahe helped to establish the Copernican theory. Unlike Copernicus, he was a great astronomical observer and compiled a vast amount of information about the heavens, including a catalog of 777 stars. His explanation of two phenomena helped to undermine the old system. One of these was the appearance of a new star in 1572. According to the accepted views, no change could take place in the region of the stars, where all was perfect and immutable. Tycho was among those who

showed that the new star was a star indeed, and that changes must take place in the stellar regions. He also did work on comets showing that they were solid bodies moving in fixed courses through planetary space. This contradicted the older theory, which held that each planet is encased in a solid and impenetrable sphere.

When Tycho died in 1601, he left his observations to Johannes Kepler, a young astronomer who had worked with him in his last years at the court of Emperor Rudolf II in Prague. Of all the men alive at the time, Kepler was the one best qualified to use these observations for further advances in astronomy. Kepler (1571-1630) was a victim of the religious bigotry of the age. He was a German Lutheran whose unorthodox religious views prevented him from becoming a Lutheran clergyman or a professor at the Protestant University of Tübingen. Add to this that he suffered from Catholic intolerance while living in imperial territory, that his mother was accused of witchcraft, that he had constant financial difficulties, and that his work was not appreciated by his contemporaries, with the exception of Galileo.

Kepler became an adherent of the Copernican system while still a young man. His attitude toward it was not one of cold scientific detachment, but was almost religious. He was struck by its beauty and was especially attracted by the central position of the sun; in fact, Kepler was almost a sun worshipper. Thus impressed by the mathematical symmetry disclosed by the heliocentric universe, he devoted himself with passionate enthusiasm to the discovery of the many other mathematical harmonies that he was sure were there. He was given to all sorts of speculations in this connection, including some that were of a poetic, religious, and musical nature. Many of the harmonies that he found, or thought he found, were scientifically useless. Among them, however, were his three laws of planetary motion, which were of great value to astronomy.

Kepler's first law is that the planets, in their revolutions about the sun, describe ellipses rather than circles (although the planetary orbits are close to circular in form). The second law states that the radius vector drawn from the sun to a planet describes equal areas in equal periods of time. This was a mathematical description of the fact that a planet's speed increases as it approaches the sun and decreases as it gets farther from it. This was later to be important to Newton in working out his law of universal gravitation. The third law, which was especially inspiring to Kepler, is that the squares of the periodic times of the planets are proportional to the cubes of their mean distances from the sun. With this law, Kepler established a mathematical relationship, which he had long sought, between a planet's distance from the sun and the time of its revolution, and thus, as he thought, of the underlying harmony of the universe.

Among the qualities that contributed to Kepler's greatness and made him one of the founders of modern science were his insistence on exact observation and his refusal to accept any conclusion that did not square with all the observed data. He worked for several years on the motions of Mars and finally, assuming circular orbits, produced a

description that came very close to the observations he had received from Brahe. Nevertheless, it did not coincide precisely with these observations, so Kepler scrapped his previous work and started over. It was in this investigation that he came to see that the path followed by a planet must be an ellipse. Previous astronomers, including Copernicus, had not insisted on such complete accuracy.

Kepler's discoveries gave support to the Copernican theory, and his thought and outlook mark a further step in the mathematical interpretation of nature. Kepler, like Copernicus, was affected by Pythagorean thought, which was enjoying a revival. For him, the real world is a mathematical harmony, and the real characteristics of things are mathematical, quantitative. Real knowledge must, therefore, be mathematical knowledge.

And so the universe came to be increasingly seen as a vast machine operating according to mathematical laws. These laws, and the aspects of nature that could be formulated in terms of these laws, were the truth. Whatever else seems to exist, but cannot be expressed in terms of mathematical laws, cannot claim to possess objective existence. To quote Galileo: "...tastes, odors, colors, and so on are no more than mere names so far as the object in which we place them is concerned, and...they reside only in the consciousness."²⁰

The continuing success of great scientists in discovering laws of nature helped to give greater prestige and wider currency to these ideas. The work of Galileo and Newton helped to make it clear that there were not different kinds of motion for different kinds of beings, but that one set of laws governed both celestial and terrestrial motion. And so the vast universe came more and more to be seen and felt as a collection of physical bodies moving through space according to immutable mathematical laws.

As this process continued, men's conceptions of divinity changed. None of the early scientists questioned the existence or providence of a personal God. More and more, however, the Almighty was cast in the role of the author of mathematical law or as a sort of celestial mechanic. He had created the machine, which could then be counted on to operate by itself. However, as long as all natural phenomena could not be explained by any known laws, there appeared to be irregularities in the mechanism, and God was needed to make the necessary adjustments. With the progress of scientific knowledge, the irregularities tended to disappear, as they were seen to be explainable in terms of newly discovered laws and, therefore, no longer irregular at all.

In the light of all these facts, there would eventually come a time when some of the more daring thinkers no longer saw the necessity of postulating the presence of a deity to explain the workings of the universe. God was rejected, and a universe that consisted of matter in motion was accepted as self-explanatory. These developments took centuries to unfold, and were far in the future from the period with which we are concerned.

As has been pointed out, the Copernican theory had a difficult time gaining acceptance. It met with either indifference or opposition. Luther opposed it. The Catholic church at first paid little attention to it. In England, in 1551, there appeared a book by Robert Recorde, *The Castle of Knowledge*, which expounded the Copernican system, but other Englishmen were opposed to it. It was not until the next century, when Galileo made observations with his telescope that tended to confirm the new system, that it made much impact on the imagination by Englishmen. In Spain, interestingly enough, the atmosphere was more hospitable to Copernican ideas than in other countries; from 1561, students at the University of Salamanca could be taught the heliocentric system if they wished.

In 1600 Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake for heresy in Rome. One of his numerous offenses was that he taught a philosophy inspired by the Copernican system, a philosophy that involved the idea of an infinite universe. In 1633 the great Galileo was interrogated by the Holy Office for his advocacy of the Copernican system, and forced under threat of torture to abjure it. By the end of the eighteenth century, the system had been widely accepted, though the works of Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo remained on the official Roman Index of Prohibited Books until the nineteenth century.

ANATOMY: VESALIUS

In the Renaissance, as we have seen, art and science were not sharply distinguished as they are today. Some of the chief problems faced and solved by artists were what we would refer to as scientific problems, and the artists had scientific interests. This can be most clearly seen in artists like Piero della Francesca and Leonardo da Vinci who wrote on scientific subjects, but it is also true of artists in general. The problems of perspective and anatomy are the most obvious examples of scientific problems faced by the artists.

In order to represent the human body accurately, artists made careful anatomical studies, sometimes by means of the dissection of corpses. In the process, they were responsible for important scientific discoveries. Leonardo was the first to make accurate drawings of the human embryo. Professor Erwin Panofsky refers to Leonardo as "the founder of anatomy as a science." The mastery of perspective has an importance in the history of anatomy, because it made possible the production of accurate drawings indispensable to the progress of anatomical study. The invention of printing was also important in this connection, providing for the reproduction in large quantities of the accurate drawings that were becoming available.

Another service performed by printing was the production and widespread distribution of the correct texts of classical authorities that humanistic scholars were preparing. These texts were not an unmixed blessing, however; while on the one hand they made it possible to know more accurately than before what a Greek or Roman author had said, they also helped to perpetuate his errors.

In the fields of anatomy, physiology, and medicine, the greatest authorities were Aristotle and, above all, Galen (c.129 c.200). In spite of his undisputed greatness, some of Galen's ideas were erroneous and led students astray for centuries. He had never had the opportunity to dissect a human body, and, therefore drew conclusions about human anatomy from animals available to him. He was also too much affected by the idea of final cause or purpose, which came chiefly from Aristotle. In the case of Galen, this preoccupation meant that his research was directed toward finding the purpose of each part of the body and showing how well it was adapted to this purpose.

The uncritical acceptance of Galen's authority hindered anatomical advances. Yet the subject was not studied from a purely theoretical standpoint. In the medical faculties of universities, especially in northern Italy, bodies were dissected for students' instruction, and as early as the second decade of the fourteenth century, a work on anatomy was written based on human dissection. Yet even those who performed or witnessed dissections were under Galen's influence.

There were signs of a more empirical attitude and a willingness to challenge ancient authority. Giovanni Manardo of the University of Ferrara insisted that the authority of reason and truth must be preferred to that of any man, alive or dead. Yet even those who had empirical evidence to guide them still regarded Galen with reverence. This was true of the man who dared to criticize Galen's errors and who did more than any other person to establish the science of anatomy, Andreas Vesalius of Brussels (1514-64).

Vesalius came from a medical family; his father was personal apothecary to the emperor Charles V. Vesalius himself, after study in Louvain and Paris, went to Padua, where he received the doctorate in 1537 and became professor of anatomy and surgery before his twenty-third birthday. He was thoroughly trained in the tradition of Galen, whose works he later published.

Early in his career at Padua, he began work on his masterpiece, *De humani corporis fabrica* (On the Fabric of the Human Body), which was published in 1543, the same year as the *De revolutionibus* of Copernicus. It was not until he had become fairly well advanced in his work on this book that he was forced to realize that Galen's ideas would have to be opposed in many ways. The *De Fabrica* is a complete description of the human body, illustrated by woodcuts prepared under Vesalius's direction and sometimes even better than the text. No other work on the subject had ever been so full and accurate. There are errors, based sometimes on inadequate observation, sometimes on a reluctance to disagree with Galen. It has been said that he followed Galen's errors much more often than he corrected them.

Vesalius was not alone in his aims and methods. Contemporaries were moving in the same direction, and some preceded him in the qualities that characterize his work: a willingness

to contradict Galen on the basis of firsthand observation; the practice of dissection as a means of acquiring such observation; and the use of accurate illustrations to complement their texts. His book was outstanding; it was more complete and thorough than the others. It established, better than any other work, the proper method for the study of anatomy; it gave future researchers the tools to go further, and it provided the techniques to correct its errors. Modern anatomy had begun its career.

CONCLUSION

The men and movements discussed briefly in this chapter represent only a fraction of the scientific progress of the period, which sees the birth of our modern scientific civilization. It is instructive to draw parallels to the work of Copernicus and Vesalius, different as they are in many respects. Both men were dependent to some extent on the work and ideas of contemporaries and predecessors. Both worked in a climate of thought and feeling that was ready for their contributions. They were not isolated phenomena, bright stars flashing across a night of darkness. The way was prepared for them; even so, they did not entirely abandon older and erroneous patterns of thought.

This is not to minimize their contributions or the contributions of other workers at the time. The element of individual achievement of genius cannot be discounted. As in the case of the religious revolution started by Luther, we must be careful about the use of the word "inevitable." Genius is a difficult term to define or understand; but it exists, and it is not inevitable. The time must be ready for the great man, but he can do things in his time that other men cannot.

The scientific revolution, ushering in the modern scientific age, has profoundly influenced patterns of thought. By making possible ever increasing control of physical forces, it has helped to instill a confidence that people can master nature for their own purposes. By providing rational explanations for phenomena previously unexplained, the scientific revolution has helped to overcome superstitious fear of mysterious supernatural and occult forces. From this point of view, the present day interest in magic and various forms of the occult is a long step backwards. The scientific revolution was an important factor in promoting the trust in reason as the most reliable guide for human affairs. To some extent, this exaltation of science and reason has led to a downgrading of the claims of sentiment, emotion, art, music, and religion. Intentionally or not, the rise of a more scientific consciousness is partly responsible for the secularization of the modern world.



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CHAPTER 24

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Throughout this book we have had abundant evidence that in the period we have discussed intolerance and persecution for religious dissidents was the rule, not the exception. No one denomination or sect had a monopoly; both the old church and the new were more than willing to banish, torture, imprison, fine, and put to death those who disagreed with their official views on such matters as the Trinity, the nature of the Lord's Supper, and infant baptism.

TOLERANCE, INTOLERANCE, PERSECUTION

Some groups who are honored for their contributions to religious freedom do not carry unblemished records. The Anabaptists, whose idea of the separation of church and state is a great step toward freedom of religion, were often guilty of harsh and uncharitable conduct toward dissenters within their own ranks and even toward other groups of like-minded individuals. It is not easy for us to judge how they would have dealt with dissent if they had become the officially recognized church in any large area for any length of time, since it was their lot to suffer persecution universally. In the one case where Anabaptists had a brief ascendancy in Münster in the 1530s the record is not encouraging. Religious history seems to indicate that persecuted groups, claiming freedom while they are being oppressed, become in their turn persecutors if they manage to achieve dominance. This certainly applies to both Catholics and Protestants in the Reformation and post-Reformation eras.

Religious intolerance then is the undoubted fact. What were the motives for persecution? Professor Roland H. Bainton gives three prerequisites: "(1) The persecutor must believe that he is right; (2) that the point in question is important; (3) that coercion will be effective."²¹ These three beliefs must, therefore, have been widely shared in the sixteenth century by individuals and groups whose views in other respects differed widely.

Granting the validity of this argument, is there another and apparently opposite possibility? May it be that sometimes the persecutor, outwardly so sure that he is right, harbors deep in his thinking perhaps largely hidden even from himself a doubt that his views are correct after all? The heretic or dissenter then becomes an actualization or projection of the persecutor's own doubts, which he is anxious above all to hide from himself. It, therefore, becomes essential for his security that he suppress these doubts. In getting rid of the heretic, he is then getting rid of his own questions and inner fears. This is advanced as a possibility, though by its very nature it is unlikely to be susceptible of definite proof, and in any event it would not apply in every case. Religious dogmas and doctrines deal with things unseen, which must be received through faith; in such matters, it is surely easy to have doubts.

It is also asserted that persecution and bigotry on religious grounds can be best explained by assuming that the religious justification is not the basic one, but merely a reflection, even a subterfuge, for deeper underlying motives, which may be, for example, economic or political. It is argued that at a time when religion was so intimately bound up with the political and social order, uniformity of religion within a state appeared as an absolute necessity to prevent internal breakdown, chaos, and even anarchy. There is a good deal of truth to this argument, because that is how it seemed to many in the sixteenth century. To a certain extent, their fears were justified in the circumstances of the time; religious conflict was associated in many countries with civil disorder and rebellion.

To assert, however, that in these struggles religion was always a secondary factor, and that the real issue was always political, social, or economic may be an oversimplification. It may reflect, not so much the sixteenth century, in which religion was a vital reality, as the twentieth, in which a much more secular outlook prevails. It is quite likely that, at least in a good many cases, the causes of religious persecution were religious.

That such an apparently self-evident statement needs to be made at all is a sign of the extent to which Marx and Freud have accustomed us to look for the meaning behind the appearance and to take little or nothing at its face value. Still, the people who did the persecuting, and those who were being persecuted, thought religious motives were causing it all. Maybe it would be presumptuous of us, at this distance, to decide that we always know them better than they knew themselves. Here we can quote the works of Professor Ernest Nelson on the subject: "It is my conviction...that these views of faith, exclusive salvation and the extreme criminality of heresy were not formulated in order to defend a persecution determined upon for worldly purposes, but that they were the premises of a persecution which was essentially religious."²²

Do we, in any event, have any right to sit in judgment on the religious persecution of the sixteenth century? It cannot be denied that this turbulent age often saw self-styled Christians treating one another with a cruelty and barbarity that contrast strangely with the life and teachings of their Lord. Those who refuse to make such judgments base their

refusal on the following types of argument: Moral judgments are inadmissible in history, and no age or society has a right to pass such judgments on any other; our own century has on its conscience offenses against humanity that make those of the sixteenth century seem puny and insignificant; and the kinds of behavior that we are tempted to condemn are manifestations of the spirit of the age, and we must make the effort to see the period in its own terms, not ours.

If we admit that there is a substantial amount of truth in these contentions, we may still question the last of them that there is a spirit of the age that produces, explains, and in a sense justifies acts of bigotry and repression. The expression "spirit of the age," does not refer to a real, living entity that has a sort of independent existence and manifests itself through the people who lived during a given period. It is a convenient term that refers to patterns of thought or feeling held by such a large or influential segment of the people that it gave a distinctive coloring to the period. There are always many others who disagree with what we tend to consider the dominant outlook of the age.

Therefore, if we can find significant voices raised in opposition to the prevailing bigotry and intolerance of the sixteenth century, we can say that in this respect the age stands condemned, not by us, but by some of its own more enlightened spirits. We have already seen that there were individuals who spoke and acted on behalf of humanity and tolerance in the face of conflicting religious views. We have referred to Erasmus, Castellio, Montaigne, William of Orange, Stephen B thory, Balthasar Hubmaier, and Henry of Navarre, among others. A few more may be mentioned here.

Sebastian Franck, the spiritualist, believed that persecution is a sign of heresy. He wrote in 1539, "To me, anyone who wishes my good and can bear with me by his side, is a good brother, whether papist, Lutheran, Zwinglian, Anabaptist, or even Turk...."²³ Valentin Weigel (1533-88), although a Lutheran minister, was really a part of the same spiritualist tradition as Franck. He too believed in an invisible church whose members were dispersed everywhere. God can be found in all sects.

Among Catholics too, especially among those who had been influenced by Erasmus, voices were raised in behalf of conciliation among the religious groups. Georg Witzel (1501-73), who for a while was Lutheran but returned to the Catholic church, never gave up his belief in conciliation. He was opposed to the use of force in religious matters, disliked the Council of Trent, and urged the Protestants and Catholics to overcome their differences and unite.

An interesting figure in the development of ideas of toleration is the Italian Jacobus Acontius (c.1500-c.1567), who became a Protestant, fled to Switzerland, and spent his last years in England where he served as a military engineer and received a pension from Queen Elizabeth I. In 1565 he published *The Stratagems of Satan*. It is one of Satan's

stratagems, he wrote, to cause religious strife and dissension. He recommends methods of overcoming this stratagem, including the renunciation of all violence in religious matters. He also recommends the Erasmian idea of distinguishing between the fundamental doctrines on which all should agree, and the less important ones, on which disagreement is possible without danger to unity. While he granted to the state the right to control the church, he denied that it could use force against heretics or in the settlement of controversies over religion. He agreed that each person should be free to follow his own choice in religion; the resultant variety of opinions will eventually lead to the discovery of the truth.

In France, as has been shown, the relentless persecution of the Huguenots by the crown brought on the horrors of civil war. In the midst of all this cruelty and bloodshed, some men sought peaceful solutions to the religious conflicts. One of these men was Guillaume Postel (1510-81). Postel not only studied the classical languages Latin, Greek, and Hebrew but also Arabic, and became very interested in eastern civilizations.

In 1544 he published his work *De orbis terrae concordia* (Concerning the Harmony of the Earth). In this book he advocated universal religious peace, to be achieved by convincing Jews, Moslems, and pagans of the truth of Christianity. To this end he undertook to prove both that Christianity is true and that there are basic points common to all religions. This position is broader than that of Erasmus and his followers, who tried to demonstrate the common belief of the various denominations within Christianity. Throughout his career, he continued to urge reconciliation among Christians and between Christians and all others.

During the civil wars, which began in 1562 and lasted until the final decade of the century, a number of statesmen and Catholic clergymen and prelates spoke for at least some measure of toleration for the Huguenots. From the reign of Charles IX (1560-74), more and more persons in France, both Catholic and Protestant, began to argue that the conscience cannot be compelled.

It was the party of the politiques, concerned above all with the welfare of France rather than the interests of a particular sect, who saw in religious toleration and freedom the only solution to the civil strife. Most of the politiques were Catholic, though after the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre there were Protestants who adopted the politique position, being willing to grant to Catholics the same freedom they claimed for themselves.

From the time when it became clear that Henry III would be succeeded by Henry of Navarre until the latter's conversion to the Catholic faith, it became urgent for Frenchmen to consider whether a heretic could wear the French crown. An anonymous pamphlet of 1591, *The True and Legitimate Constitution of the State*, claimed that the state and religion were independent of one another, but agreed also that religion should be

subordinate to the state. Within one state, it further asserted, various religions could coexist; freedom of worship is no danger to society. A ruler's religion had nothing to do with his acceptability. On the other hand, the king should not force his religion on his subjects who are not of his faith. This interesting point of view envisages something like the modern secular state.

The Protestant Francois de La Noue, who fought in the army of Henry of Navarre, wrote of the possibility and desirability of Catholics and Protestants living together, although he hoped that someday religious unification would be possible.

To these scattered examples of men who, for various reasons and in differing degrees, favored religious toleration, many others could be added. There were also rulers during the period who were opposed to the use of compulsion in religious matters, including some whom we have not mentioned, such as the emperor Maximilian II (1564-76). Yet we are left with the impression of a prevailing intolerance and bigotry in religion. While it is perhaps impossible to plumb all the psychological, social, and other causes for this, a few suggestions may be offered, in addition to those made at the beginning of this discussion.

It might be well, first of all, to abandon the idea that progress and enlightenment have made us more tolerant than our forebears. If religion does not excite us as much as it once did, the reason is probably indifference rather than broadmindedness. In any event, there are parts of the civilized world today where religious differences are still a matter of life and death. In our own secularized society, people are still capable of intolerance, bigotry, and all sorts of irrational prejudice toward those who are sufficiently different from themselves in matters they consider important.

There are no personal villains; we cannot accuse the men of the sixteenth century of any special iniquity, though at the same time it is unnecessary to accept the view that people are always all alike. If they were, history would be a much less interesting study than it is. There are two possible factors that help to explain the religious virulence of the period:

1. The close connection between church and state, found in Protestant countries as well as in Catholic.

As long as a single religion enjoyed the exclusive protection and coercive power of the state, and the state associated its safety with the maintenance of religious uniformity within its borders, there was little hope for religious freedom. Only after long years and painful lessons, which exceed the boundaries of this book, did it become clear at least in some places that the state must remain neutral in religion. It should intervene in religious matters only to prevent intolerance and discrimination, not to enforce them.

2. The dogmatic approach to religion.

A person's religious reliability was based on his adherence to certain dogmas, rather than on the degree to which his life expressed the Christian virtues. To be safe, one had to be orthodox. This made heterodoxy, or heresy, the most serious religious offense. The coming of a more undogmatic religion, with an emphasis on moral character and uprightness of life, would in time bring greater tolerance and mutual acceptance. This ideal, foreshadowed by Erasmus, was also a long time in coming.

Of course, one reason for the height of religious passion was the importance of religion in people's lives. One of the eventual causes of the cooling of this sort of passion was the loss by religion of its central position in society and in the individual life. As religion lost its power to dominate men's thinking, it also lost its capacity to rouse bitterness and hatred at least to a degree and in certain areas. Even in the sixteenth century, the persons who contributed the most to the growth of toleration were those to whom religion was not the dominant concern of their lives. William the Silent and Henry of Navarre, though no doubt sincerely religious in their own ways, were men who had changed religion more than once in their lives, and were by no means fanatics. Queen Elizabeth I of England had lived through many changes of religion in her country, and like Henry and William, was primarily concerned with politics. Religious freedom owes the Reformation a debt, but it is an indirect one; the great leaders of the Protestant Revolt did not believe in religious freedom or foster it. It came in spite of them one of the beneficent results of their work, but a result of which they would have heartily disapproved. This may stand as a statement of the extent and limits of human freedom: Men are free to make choices that will significantly affect the course of history; but they are not free to control the ways in which their choices will act.

THE OCCULT AND SUPERNATURAL

To the prescientific mentality of the Renaissance and Reformation period, men's lives were likely to be affected at every turn by innumerable unseen forces. Good and evil spirits filled the air; the devil was a real and threatening presence; the heavenly bodies exercised an awesome influence over the fates of nations and individuals. As always, times of crisis war, plague, revolution, social unrest heightened these superstitious beliefs, which had tremendous influence during this period. Among the most significant phenomena of this sort were witchcraft, astrology, and magic.

The belief in witches and the fear of their malevolent power was very old, and among Christians there was a literal application of the Biblical injunction, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." (Exodus 22:18) However, the most widespread campaign against witchcraft in Christian Europe did not begin until the late fifteenth century. In 1484, Pope Innocent VIII issued the bull *Summis desiderantes affectibus* which called attention to the prevalence of witchcraft "in some parts of Northern Germany" and elsewhere in German-speaking territories. He, therefore, granted to two Inquisitors, the Dominicans Kramer and

Sprenger, authority to proceed against such people in the territories mentioned.

Two years after the bull, the two men named in it brought out a book, the *Malleus Maleficarum*, or The Hammer of Witches, an extensive study of witchcraft. Throughout the sixteenth century and beyond, the fight against witches went on. When the split in the church came, Protestants were just as strongly opposed to witchcraft and just as convinced of its reality as Catholics. All over Europe, thousands of persons were burned as witches. It has been estimated that from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century, the number goes into the millions. James VI of Scotland, later James I of England, wrote a book about witches and went about in constant fear that witches were planning torments to be inflicted on himself, though in his later years he became somewhat less credulous. The mother of Johannes Kepler, the great scientist, was accused of witchcraft, and he spent much time and energy working to free her from the charge.

Witches were believed to be in collusion with the devil. They met with him in the sinister orgies of the Witches' Sabbath. They sometimes had intercourse with him. Their powers are summarized in the bull of Innocent VIII. They slay infants in the mother's womb and also the offspring of cattle. They blast the produce of the earth, as well as men, women, and beasts. They afflict men and women, as well as animals, with pains and diseases. They hinder men from performing the sexual act and women from conceiving. They blasphemously renounce the Faith, "and at the instigation of the Enemy of Mankind they do not shrink from committing and perpetuating the foulest abominations and filthiest excesses to the deadly peril of their own souls...."

In the midst of the general hysteria, some voices of reason were raised. Physician Johann Weyer in a book published in 1566 opposed the supernatural explanation of witchcraft. He refused to attribute power to the devil, and, as we would put it, felt that people who considered themselves to be witches were suffering from psychological disorders. For treating these people, he insisted that medical knowledge was necessary. Montaigne also says that such people should have "Hellebore rather than hemlock." With his usual sanity, he refused to believe the stories he heard about witches.

Truly, I would not believe my own self about this. How much more natural and likely it seems to me that two men are lying than that one man should pass with the winds in twelve hours from the east to the west! How much more natural that our understanding should be carried away from its base by the volatility of our untracked mind than that one of us, in flesh and bone, should be wafted up a chimney on a broomstick by a strange spirit!

Astrology and magic were also exceedingly important during this period. Nothing has done more to discredit the older picture of the Renaissance as an age of emerging reason and enlightenment than the growing awareness of the extent to which even very learned

men of the period were immersed in these traditions. It is even possible to speak of a revival of magic in the Renaissance. While magic and astrology may seem at first glance to be closely allied, this is not altogether true. There is a sense in which they are opposed. Magic involves man's control over the forces of nature; and even over supernatural forces; and astrology, in one aspect, assumes man's subjection to the heavens.

In another way, however, astrology and magic are more closely allied. In order for the magus to exercise his mastery over the forces inherent in the universe, he must be initiated into the secret relationships that exist between the heavens and earthly things. There was something very appealing to many Renaissance thinkers in the conception of hidden relationships, known to the select few, which unite the different parts of the universe and which, if known, enable man to exercise a mastery that is almost more than human. These ideas satisfied some of the deepest desires and most cherished concepts of the period: the search for an underlying unity in the multiplicity of the world; the idea of the dignity and power of man; and the notion of an intellectual elite, a nobility of the mind.

Another form taken by the search for unity was the idea that certain basic truths had been revealed to the greatest thinkers of all the ages and were to be found in all intellectual and religious traditions. Since it was still difficult to appreciate non-Christian thinkers on their own terms, many men longed to show that these great minds were actually in basic agreement with Christianity and with one another. Egyptians, Chaldaeans, Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans all were welcomed into the fold.

When it could be shown that the doctrines of these sages not only agreed with the true faith, but that they also held secret meanings that gave men power over cosmic forces, the deep-seated longing for unity was satisfied and a contribution was made to the knowledge of magic.

Thus the so-called Hermetic and Cabalistic doctrines were of great importance. The Hermetic writings were actually productions of the second and third centuries A.D. They were written by a group of unknown writers, probably Greek, and were based largely on Platonic and Stoic thought. They were attributed to a Hermes Trismegistus (thrice-great), supposed to have been an Egyptian wise man of immense antiquity. His respectability in Christian circles is attested by the fact that he is pictured on the pavement of the cathedral of Siena.

This nonexistent character though of course he was believed to have really existed had a tremendous impact on the Renaissance. Among his most devoted followers was Marsilio Ficino, whom we have seen as the leading figure in Florentine Neoplatonism. Ficino translated and studied the Hermetic writings and believed in their magical doctrines. He was a physician, and attempted to use celestial influences for medical purposes, according to what he had learned from the Hermetic philosophy.

Pico della Mirandola, Ficino's friend and colleague, shared his interests. He too wanted to find the bonds that united the great thinkers of the ages, and he knew a great deal about Oriental, Hebrew, Greek and Roman, and medieval thought. He was particularly concerned about the Cabala, a mystical doctrine based on an esoteric interpretation of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. The Cabala, as interpreted by Pico and other Christian thinkers, showed that the Hebrew thought of the Old Testament agreed with the essential teachings of the Greeks and with the tenets of the Christian faith. His *Heptaplus* is an interpretation of the first twenty-seven verses of the first chapter of the book of Genesis. Through a very elaborate seven-fold exegesis of these verses, Pico demonstrated that in them their author Moses had out of his vast wisdom expounded on the nature of the entire universe, and that his explanations were in accord with Egyptian, Greek, and Christian thought.

In a brief final chapter, he sums up his views in this way: "It is the firm opinion of all the ancients, unanimously asserted as beyond doubt, that the five books of the Mosaic law contain the entire knowledge of all arts and wisdom both divine and human. This knowledge is hidden and concealed, however, in the very letters of which the phrases of the law are composed."²⁴ He proceeds to demonstrate this by showing that the Hebrew word translated by the phrase "In the beginning" at the start of the book of Genesis when subjected to proper interpretation explains "the whole plan of the creation of the world and of all things in it."

The Cabala also carried with it magical doctrines. This was a very ambitious type of magic because it drew upon powers beyond mere nature the powers derived from angels, from the names of God, and from the Hebrew language, which was considered sacred. Pico's *Oration on the Dignity of Man* has been called "the great charter of Renaissance Magic."²⁵ In the *Oration*, he distinguished between bad magic, which depends on demons, and the good kind, which is "the utter perfection of natural philosophy."²⁶ Thus he performs the feat of reconciling Christianity with magic, at least to his own satisfaction. He finds that this kind of magic has been studied and practiced among Persians, Greeks, Arabs, and Christians. It understands the harmony of the universe and the affinity of natures, brings forth the miracles concealed in the world and in God's mysteries, and weds earth to Heaven. This kind of magic contemplates the wonders of God, and leads to the love and worship of Him.

The belief in the occult, in magic and in astrology, did not, however, mean an unbounded credulity. In fact, it could be combined with a thoroughgoing skepticism. The reason for this may be that a study of magic undermined faith in human reason and in a universe that could be grasped by reason. The coexistence of these tendencies is illustrated by the interesting figure of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim (1486 1535). Agrippa studied the Cabala and the Hermetic writings and wrote a book entitled *De occulta philosophia* (Concerning Occult Philosophy). Yet his most important book was his *De*

incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum (Concerning the Uncertainty and Vanity of the Sciences) of 1526.

Agrippa had long harbored doubts about the powers of the human mind, and these doubts had grown through the years. Earlier he had sought refuge from them by turning to the occult, but by this time he had come to doubt the occult also. He now turned to the Bible and divine grace as the only source of truth.

This position, called fideism, was also present in Montaigne, and is especially clear in his longest essay, "Apology for Raymond Sebond." (II, 12) There were other skeptics in the period. Pietro Pomponazzi (1462 1525) in his treatise *De immortalitate animae* (On the Immortality of the Soul) of 1516 argued that the soul's immortality cannot be demonstrated philosophically and must be accepted by faith. In 1581 Francisco Sanchez published a book entitled *Quod nihil scitur* (That Nothing Is Known). In it he states: "I do not even know this that I know nothing.²⁷ In his book he brings out many reasons to prove man's ability to gain knowledge. One could mention many others who doubted the capacities of the human mind. As Professor Don Cameron Allen puts it, relativism had come to stay.²⁸

Skepticism and relativism were potentially corrosive of dogma and dogmatism, and capable of inspiring a breadth, balance, and tolerance sadly lacking to the fierce theological quarrels of the sixteenth century. In time their effects would be felt, but those effects were largely in the future.

EPILOGUE:

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY IN HISTORY

The sixteenth century had a tremendous significance in the development of European, and even of world civilization. Students have, of course, differed over the exact nature of its importance. Perhaps we can approach the question by breaking it down that is, discuss three of the most important aspects of the age and examine a few of the many ways in which they have been interpreted by historians. Which of these is "most important?" The returns are not all in, and probably will never be. When we ask what is the most important part of any historical period or movement, we are essentially asking what had the greatest impact on the future. But the future changes. Thus what seems most important about the sixteenth century may differ from one age to the next, and we cannot foresee what will seem most significant to coming generations.

To begin with, one cannot find responsible scholars who look upon the Protestant Revolt as either a giant stride in the growth of freedom and enlightenment, on the one hand, or as an unmitigated evil brought about by dangerous men on the other. A more balanced view prevails among Catholic and Protestant students alike. Catholics today evince a much

more positive appreciation of Luther. John M. Todd, an English Catholic layman, has written a sympathetic biography of the reformer; Father Joseph Lortz, the distinguished German Catholic historian, has contributed greatly to an appreciation of Luther. One aspect of the new Catholic judgment of Luther is a recognition that the theology in which he was trained departed from sound doctrine and needed reform. The French scholar Father Louis Bouyer has told how he left the Protestant faith in which he was brought up and became a Catholic to preserve the values of Protestantism. John P. Dolan, an American Catholic historian, has written a book on the Reformation with the subtitle, "A Conciliatory Assessment of Opposite Views." The reader of Dolan's book is struck by the thoroughness and detail of his account of the abuses in the church on the eve of the Reformation.

Another recent trend in Reformation scholarship is to diminish the differences between Catholics and reformers and emphasize the similarities. For Professor Jaroslav Pelikan, the reformers were "obedient rebels." The French scholar Jean Delumeau, writing with an avowedly ecumenical purpose, emphasizes that the reformers were closer to the Catholics than they realized. A Dominican has written a book with an introduction by a Protestant to suggest a continuity between Aquinas's thought and Luther's. A German Lutheran pastor has produced a work with a preface to the American edition written by a Jesuit to prove the essentially Catholic character of the Augsburg Confession. Such examples as these and many more could be given show the effects of the ecumenical spirit on Reformation scholarship.

Another development in the interpretation of the Reformation is the conviction that it was primarily a religious movement. It has been interpreted as the result of other factors economic, political, psychological, social. Some students may still see it in this light, but it seems more accurate to regard the Reformation as basically a religious movement. Political conditions, economic and social factors, psychological phenomena all played their part. But there seems no valid reason to deny religion its place as an autonomous human motive, along with the others.

In the area of psychological interpretation, a notable contribution has been made in the study of Luther by the distinguished psychologist Erik H. Erikson. He has applied his knowledge of human psychological development to the career of the reformer, and interprets his life as a series of internal crises. Erikson's methods and conclusions are somewhat controversial, but he has made a serious effort to cope with the problems involved, and this work cannot be ignored by students of the subject. Some will feel that it is a dead end; others will argue that it opens up important avenues for investigation.

This may be the place to say something about the question of Protestantism and the spirit of capitalism. When Max Weber wrote his essay on the subject early in this century, he could not have known what he was starting. An immense and apparently never-ending stream of discussion has been devoted to the subject. It should be noted that Weber did not

write about Protestantism and capitalism; he wrote about the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, contending that the former made a great contribution to the development of the latter. While perhaps nobody in the world certainly not the present writer has read all that has ever been written on the issue, the ideas of the Swedish economist Kurt Samuelsson seem convincing; his contention is that there is no connection. Certainly the great reformers and their early followers were not aware of such a relationship, and would have rejected the idea that economic prosperity is a sign of special divine favor.

Recently scholars have argued for the preeminence of the scientific revolution. Herbert Butterfield, well-known English historian, considered it the most important event in European history since the birth of Christianity. Compared to it, the Renaissance and Reformation were merely episodes. This statement is arresting, memorable, provocative, and largely meaningless, since by failing to define the terms it uses it deprives them of any ascertainable content. What if the Renaissance is defined to include the scientific revolution, as it often is? To talk of the Renaissance, Reformation, and scientific revolution as though they were all distinct entities marching side by side or against each other is to do violence to the complexity that characterizes historical experience, and on which Butterfield has elsewhere insisted.

A third aspect that scholars often choose as central is the rise of the nation-state. A style of historical writing that enjoys considerable vogue today minimizes the importance of this development and concentrates instead on a broad survey of social, economic, religious, and cultural conditions throughout Europe. This approach has undoubted value in bringing out general trends and important interrelationships, which might otherwise go unnoticed. It may also be a response to the dissatisfaction increasingly felt today with the restrictive and destructive effects of nationalism and national sovereignty, and the desire to break through the artificial barriers that divide mankind.

Yet, if applied to modern European history, this approach runs the risk of distorting the facts. For in modern times, the nation-state has been a most significant actor on the world scene perhaps the most powerful force of all. This has not been an unmixed blessing far from it. Two great German historians, Gerhard Ritter and Friedrich Meinecke, have called attention to the "demonic" quality of the state, as it has behaved in modern history. Meinecke refers to the sinful character of the state. The history of the modern world is to a great extent the record of the sins of the state.

Many of the great political thinkers of the sixteenth century saw this sinfulness, and their feelings about it took the form of an anti-monarchical bias. This was true of Machiavelli, Erasmus, Luther, and Calvin. The expression "reason of state," which began to be used in the sixteenth century, describes the motivating force behind the actions of the state: self-preservation. In the eyes of the rulers of the national state, anything is legitimate if it threatens the state. The fact that this doctrine is so seldom challenged indicates the extent to which modern civilization has been permeated with the point of view of the nation-state.

It was in the sixteenth century that the nation-states, some of which had been developing for a long time, emerged as the dominant forces in European politics. Their dealings with each other during this time formed the first chapter in the history of modern international relations and the beginning of what Ludwig Dehio has discussed in his book *The Precarious Balance*. He shows how, during the period since the sixteenth century, there has been a succession of nations striving for dominance in Europe and being prevented from consolidating it normally at the cost of war.

It is Dehio's contention that the old European state-system is destroyed. Perhaps a new Europe is in the making. Nevertheless, the older Europe the Europe that existed from the sixteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth cannot be understood without the national state, which so largely, for better or for worse, governed the destinies of a continent and of the world.

We have an illustration of this in our own time, in what may be termed the rediscovery of Protestant thought. A new depth of understanding of what the early Reformers, especially Luther, really meant, has grown up, especially in Germany and the Scandinavian countries, since about 1917. The terrible tragedies and disasters of the twentieth century have helped to give a new relevance and applicability to the insights of the Reformation, and have assisted in the crucial task of understanding the sources and possible cures for the dilemmas of our time.

What the individual student considers the most important aspect of the sixteenth century if he chooses to think in these terms will inevitably depend on his own view of history and of human society in general.



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